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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

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Vol. IV, No. I January, 1929

These photographs illustrate the use of special lenses and prisms

in the amateur film "The Fall of the House of Usher" *(See page 5)*

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Our Twentieth Anniversary

TWENTY years have passed since the National Board of Review first sought to find a way, as a socially minded group striving to reflect public thought, to help guide the then new medium of motion pictures toward a healthy, natural development, while at the same time defending the principle that the screen is to remain free for its own expression, as other arts remain free for theirs—as thought and speech themselves are free.

No thinking person today will seriously declare that the motion picture has not fully validated the rightness of that principle—that it has not proved its potency for expressing truth and beauty while performing its intermediate function of providing entertainment, and that it has not won its place beside the other arts as a creative means of showing to mankind Man. But no person cognizant of events in screen history will seriously question that had it not been for certain guidances outside the industry, certain principles evolved and forces placed in action to combat stupidity, prejudice and the often misguided impulses of otherwise well-meaning people, all calculated to harass and stifle the young medium's development—the motion picture would never have so quickly attained the prestige it has today, and might never have attained it for a hundred years. The point is, that the screen today is as much a part of our unconscious acceptance of things as twenty years ago it was a stranger in our intellectual midst, regarded with suspicion, if not ridicule, and feared in some quarters as an ally of the devil.

In those twenty years a number of things happened to change all this, and they happened because, in pace with the screen's own technical and intellectual advance, certain currents of public thought were stirred by leaders outside the industry even more than within it, resulting in clarification of thought and purpose as to how to regard and benefit the screen, due to insistence upon intelligent and liberal principles of action. Theories were found that would work in place of others that would not; constructive plans were proposed and gradually put into effect by which that portion of the public disinterestedly interested in bettering the films themselves, partly through disentangling confused concepts regarding them, could unite in guidance and support of the motion picture as it struggled to fulfill its destiny.

It is no arrogance on the part of the National Board of Review that impells it, after twenty years of severe effort in which it had to evolve, often through disappointing experience, its own philosophy and procedure, to state simply that its work in the field we have indicated was of a pioneer nature. For there it began a contribution to the growth of motion pictures, and in liberalizing public sentiment bearing upon them, that has found, as most fundamental gifts do, wide acceptance and usage by other groups and has been blended with other forces, so that under many names and through passing, not always with acknowledgment, into many hands, it has sometimes lost its identity with the National Board. The

National Board does not deplore this; its work was, and is, intended as contribution freely given, and it is finding everyday more elaborate work to do, more service to perform. But it may be pardoned, if on its twentieth Anniversary, it recalls its share in the following achievements, offering its encouragement and support to all who, knowingly or unknowingly, have been concerned in them:

(1) The theory of censorship has been weakened to the point of a diminishing fallacy.

(2) The principle of selection and classification as a means of focusing public attention on the screen's finer efforts, with its corresponding tendency to raise public taste and create a demand whereby it is possible to produce better pictures, has received country-wide acceptance in the better films movement, started by the National Board in 1916.

(3) The axiom that the screen must be left free to express itself, like the other arts, for the comprehension and enjoyment of the mentally mature, together with the corollary that the child's needs in screen entertainment must be recognized, respected and provided for, constitute a principle that has become basic in society's concept of the screen. This finds expression as to the second part, since 1915 when the National Board began its advocacy of the plan, in specially sponsored and conducted children's matinees; and as to the first part, in the public's growing tendency in the regular theatres to patronize motion pictures of a more serious and grown-up nature.

(4) The general encouragement of a screen adapted to the needs of the more perceptive and art-loving audience where may be viewed the work of creative artists whose support is not to be expected in the theatre of more popular tastes; a movement finding expression today in the growing number of Little Photoplay Theatres whose possibility the National Board began to demonstrate in 1917, and continues to demonstrate today in co-operation with communities, through showings of unusual films to specially invited and organized audiences, with a study of their response.

(5) The present inclination to study the motion picture before passing judgment upon it, and to conduct all organized work for better pictures that is constructive in its purpose, on a foundation of carefully ascertained facts, rather than on haphazard notions and preconceived beliefs.

The National Board, after twenty years, in pointing out the trend of its activities over that period, registers a justifiable feeling that its part in stimulating public discrimination in motion pictures and in speaking out for their rightful freedom to development, has been a large one. Beyond what the screen has already achieved as entertainment, amazing as that is, what it may do as a teacher in the stricter sense, as an agent of science, as a carrier of news, as a means of intercommunication between peoples and races, is in the realm of those probabilities that daily enlarge themselves. Now that it appears to be adding sound and speech to its other powers, its scope of possibilities is a matter of further speculation. Whether the cinema—the silent pattern—will go one way as a form of individual art, and the sound picture another as a more general medium of entertainment and information, no wise person will wish for certain to say.

But looking into the future the National Board can foresee for itself, and for the many groups working with it or along the general lines of its liberal policy, a greater usefulness and a more congenial responsibility in the same measure as it maintains a spirit of friendly co-operation, intelligent observation, and enthusiasm for one of mankind's greatest inventions.

With this issue, the National Board of Review Magazine appears in a smaller and more compact form. Various considerations have persuaded us to make this change, a change for the better we hope. Also, perhaps, it is an indication of the increasing maturity of this publication. For this magazine is an outgrowth of a mere pamphlet, devoted exclusively to exceptional photoplays reviews, when the selected pictures bulletin was still a somewhat dreary mimeographed sheet and the better films department folded itself into a mere four pages. Now it has attained the dignity of a real magazine speaking with authority as a house organ for all the activities of the Board, and widely quoted wherever pictures are discussed. In this new form we hope that our friends will read it more intensely, cherish it more faithfully and recommend it more heartily to all lovers of better pictures.

The Fall of the House of Usher*

IT has remained for J. S. Watson, Jr., an amateur experimenter with camera and lens, to produce the first motion picture with abstract form that intelligibly sustains a mood and creates an action of suspense.

Since Mr. Watson built his film on a literary production—that of Poe's famous tale of sadistic horror, decay and doom—it is difficult to convey an idea of the picture without mentally referring to the story of which it is a cinematic evaluation. It is difficult to disregard the narrative—as Mr. Watson meant that one should do—and describe it as tone, mood and color afforded by another medium than that of words, or rather by another language that seeks to do by its own magic what the words of Poe do by theirs. It is hard to forget the story and remember the picture independently of it. The shortcoming here of the average spectator materially decreases the faculty of wholly appreciating what Mr. Watson has done in less than a thousand feet of film—film that is compact with the genius, the subtlety, the evocative power of the cinema language itself. We shall therefore not try to think independently of Poe's story in writing this appreciation of Mr. Watson's film, for, if we did, we should be defeated at the beginning.

It will be remembered that Poe's tale begins with a traveler riding up at evenfall to a decayed mansion standing over a black tarn: "During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary track of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher"—magic sentence that has been quoted how often to illustrate an arrangement of words to give precisely the meaning and feeling intended. Well—the opening shots of the film amazingly convey this intention, and something more as well that mere words cannot do; as if the words had melted and arranged themselves in flowing images, as if the image of Poe's words had come alive before our eyes in another form, and their meaning struck us without our having to call up pictures. The film both describes and imagines for us.

Not all of it is so instantly successful as this. But thinking back on it, as a whole it is remarkably successful in retaining the mood which the first sequence creates, in carrying it toward a mounting horror, in winding its pattern around our senses, till we merge with its shadows. And it gains this advantage over the written narrative: in a dreamlike way it never lets us become aware of scenery and trapdoors. It is surprising in its dream quality and dream power, come to think of it, in its supreme evidence of what the motion picture, when it is cinema of this order, can do to become like the mind itself when, asleep or half asleep, its grotesque of images in strange relations start their parade. Poe in his story doubtless meant to some extent to give this impression; Mr. Watson's cinema interpretation of the tale really gives it more successfully—for in this sort of thing words fall short of cinema.

There are many surprising things in the film that do not strike you as surprising at all. For instance the traveler, upon becoming a visitor in the house, looses his entity and becomes just a hat bouncing rather miserably around, an intruder made uncomfortable by singular events that a hat might understand as well as a man. Rightly Mr. Watson thus subordinates him to a prop, makes him vanish, all but the symbol of his presence, while the mood of the images—the reincarnation of Poe's words—that are the real actors, develops to its intensity of climax.

Here a superb thing happens, imaginatively and cinematically. For when the Lady Usher, "the lovely Lady Madeline," emerging from her incarceration, with decay upon her, with the dust of corruption compounded on her hands and in her eyes by her long toiling

* In the last month the National Board has seen three films of arresting merit—one American, one French and one Russian. Since special appreciations of these films have been contributed, which fairly express our opinion of the pictures, we take pleasure in printing them in this issue as signed reviews in place of our regular Exceptional Photoplays department. The other reviews, on "Jeanne d'Arc" and "Ten Days," follow this one.

up the endless stairs from the tomb where she has been buried alive, looms above, then topples over the body of her demented brother, her form as it covers him crumbles away, disintegrates like the stone of the house and mingles with its ashy particles in utter annihilation. All the words that Poe used to paint his Great Corpse, his beloved Pale Lady in decay, are synthesized here by this supremacy of cinema.

Let us say, So this is art: done, we understand, with movable mirrors and prisms at the eye of the machine—the camera. Thought out, experimented with, persisted in with patience over a long period of time; the result achieved in a barn, with the barest adjuncts of scenery, but we take it with much enthusiasm and with thorough aptitude for the tools—achieved, in short, by a man who knew where he wanted to go and what it was all about. Do you ask, could this have been done by a professional with a studio full of experts? The answer is, No. Nor is art a business. Then hail the amateur movie maker. Perhaps we can leave the business of art in his hands.

We should like to see Mr. Watson, or someone like him, try his hand at cinematicizing, if there can be such a word, Poe's "Ulalume"—if one were to go on with Poe. Mr. Watson's picture gives us the first inkling we have had of pure screen lyricism. Because the story he took *is* a story and the picture cannot get entirely away from the necessity of narrating it, he has had to depend after all largely on its literalness for his dramatic effect. There is a slight failure in the film here; it is too brief for the full suspense required; Lady Usher cannot be in and out of her tomb in a thousand celluloid feet and leave us in the state of mind that Usher was in when he had endured the thought of her buried but breathing for days, and it is this state of mind that the film must reveal. The haunted palace poem, "In the greenest of our valleys, By good angels tenanted", so closely knit to the atmospheric fabric of Poe's tale, could have been enhancingly introduced; and surely the beating with the sword on the shield of brass that Usher's visitor reads to him about, should have been brazenly implanted if we are to shudder and jump when the shrouded Lady Madeline swings open the brazen doors after her escape from the sepulchre. Here the film should be hard as metal, ring and reverberate through all its images, be a sounding prelude to its final crash, emerge from its softness of decay, its crumbling pictorial quality of deep flights of falling stone, which everywhere else it so admirably connotes.

But then—not all in a day, and perfection is rare in one thing. Mr. Watson has formed his cinematic language with his prisms, his bits of this and that, his barn—and with the blessing of his imagination. He has produced a beautiful and a wondrous thing with a decorous wand of curious shadows and melting movement that gives loveliness to symbols of madness and death, after the intention of his author, but by the device of another medium. Not since *Caligari* did it, in another sense and with a manner more dependent on older arts, has this been so importantly done for the screen.

W. A. B.

Forty Best Pictures of 1928

OUR annual list of the forty best pictures reflects the opinion of the review members of the National Board of Review of whom there are about two hundred and fifty. Collectively these members reviewed sixteen hundred and eighty-two pictures during 1928. Of these four hundred and ninety-six have been put upon the regularly issued selected list for the information of Better Films Groups, and other organizations or individuals interested throughout the country.

Seventeen pictures have received further recommendation on the basis of their purely artistic merit by the Exceptional Photoplays Committee of the Board. This smaller group of pictures forms the nucleus of the forty. The rest are chosen from the larger initial selections of the Review Committee. Thus this list represents a winnowing from the best constructive work of the Board as its members perform it from day to day. It is not an individual but a democratic group selection.

The pictures are listed alphabetically without indicating any priority of merit.

The Air Circus—Fox.
The Bear's Wedding—Amkino.
Bondage—Ufa.
The Camera Man—Metro.
The Circus—United Artists.
Czar Ivan the Terrible—Amkino.
The End of St. Petersburg.—Hammerstein.

(*Continued on page* 9)

The Passion of Jean D'Arc

By Harry Alan Potamkin

Mr. Potamkin is our foreign correspondent. His review of this film is written from Paris. "The Passion of Jeanne d'Arc" has had an enormous success in France. Also in Sweden and Germany. The foremost critics in these countries have hailed it as a film work of art of the first order The film is now in this country pending arrangements for its distribution. We present this striking review as advance information to our readers.

WE are always waiting in the cinema for the eventual film which will be the vindication of the major cinema devices. We are always waiting for the film down to essentials and yet conveying a profound human experience. For the craft of the movie, like the craft of any other art, is performance—of camera, of film, of player, of screen. (Mr. Alexander Bakshy has stated these four as the different cinema performances or movements, a fundamental statement.) But as an art conclusive the cinema must find its source in experience and its final meaning in experience. Where is the motion picture—we are always asking—profound in its exploitation of performance, and profound in its transmission of experience? This query is the key to the importance of plot in the movie, not as detailed or episodic narrative but as subject-matter. The consideration of plot as narrative has been the cause and result of the movie's literalness (particularly in America) and the inability to include in the formation of the moving picture the inferences of the theme, much more important than the narrative. This inability has prevented a film so dramatically effective as Feyder's recent *Thérèse Raquin* (adopted from Zola's novel) from being a film of permanent importance.

In brief, we are always waiting for a film reduced but with passionate human content. The purity of passionate apprehension. A film mindful of the plot as the subject-matter of life. A film using the legitimate emphasis of the camera (or other kino instruments) and realizing an experience of form and content completely fused and fluid. We are always waiting for the expression of a perspicacious knowledge of the medium, and of the matter it is to convert into and by means of itself. The American film has realized in its literalness a pleasant but shallow ease of sequence. The German has stressed, in the main, the device as virtuosity rather than as an incorporate, revealing utility. The Swedish film, like the notable *Atonement of Gösta Berling,* is a rigorous life-exposition, but it has not fully grasped the principle of the conversion of the subject matter. The French movie on the whole is too banal or too pretty or too frivolous (without being lively) to merit our interest. Yet the film which in this instance satisfies our anticipation is a French film. Its achievement may be explained by the fact that its director is a Dane, Carl Th. Dreyer. The film is *The Passion of Jeanne d'Arc.*

This profound and truly passionate motion picture concerns itself with the last day of Jeanne, the day of excruciating torment. The scenario is the combined work of the director and Joseph Delteil, the dadaist who wrote the prize-winning book on The Maid. It is, I hope, no libel of M. Delteil to suspect that the disciplining will of the director (a prime essential in the cinema industry today) kept the narrative within the strenuous limits of reverence. Reverence is a portion of the intensity of this film, an intensity to which everything submits—the decor by Jean Victor-Hugo, the photography by Maté, with its superb statement of personalities by the skin-textures and moles. In total accord with this intense and intensive exploitation of the subject-matter (remember there is really no plot here, only the last moment—the queries, the betrayal, the final conflagration) is the use of the succession of individual cine-photos. These are not close-ups (there is no "closing-up" in the bland movie way), not stills (for the angles and curves are lovely and illuminating), but the bold concentration of individual faces and figures in the active, critical, voracious eye of the camera. This would suggest a static series of pictures, not Mr. Bakshy's "dynamic sequence", rather the mere physical basis of filming than the aesthetic aspiration of the cinema. But it attests to Carl Dreyer's genius that the sequence

Mlle. Falconetti as Jeanne—showing method of portrait arrangement on the screen.

is eminently fluid, dramatic, rhythmic. The succession has a definite time-order, a definite plastic arrangement in the time-order of exquisite curves (the performers exploited by the camera) and bodily angles, a definite utilization of the screen as the receptive instrument (advocated long ago by Mr. Bakshy, but very seldom realized), and a gradual almost unsuspected rise to the final mob explosion. There are diagonal curves of the moving performers, vertical inclines, a forehead above the lower frame boldly duplicating the moderated masses of the background.

There is no extraneous detail in the film. Not once does a detail fail to directly relate and contribute to the subject-matter. At one point, Jeanne sees the grave-digger pull up a skull. Unnecessary? Obvious? There is a swift succession, almost staccato in its brevity, of a field of flowers. The previous detail becomes inevitable, poignant. In fact, the entire film has that virtue, that at any moment the detail on the screen validates what preceded it. This is rhythm, this is art. The beautiful flight of birds, as Jeanne is perishing, the mother suckling her child—the former might be a sentimentalism, the latter a sur-realistic simplicism; but by the severe control of the director, they become terrible convictions of the world that would let one who loved free flight perish bound, and one who herself would suckle life burn at the stake. Creation against desolation!

The torment of the young peasant girl, "called Jeannette at home," convinced in her childishness and mysticism of her divine mission, becomes the emotional experience of the spectator. Her fears, persistent under the insistent examination, become heavy with the burden of the torment, become luminous with the momentary glamor and memory stirred by the queries. The heavy tear imparts to the spectator the sense of the days and months of anguish the girl has endured in her steadfastness to her inspiration. The luminous tear elucidates the girl's origins, her free fields,

her home, and the momentum of the inspiration that has urged her into this betrayal. The tears of Falconetti, the portrayer of Jeanne, are not the tears of a Clara Bow, insipid, irritating, fraudulent. Her eyes enamoured of God borrow no stage-pantomime, but with the grained skin and parched lips, the clipped hair, and chained walk, reveal the entire enterprise of God and land within this girl's body. Falconetti faithfully submits to the intensity of the unit, enters into it, and expresses it while she expresses Jeanne. She is the conception. She is the film. An identical loyalty is manifested by each of the accurately chosen, thoroughly participating caste. No specious prettiness, but hardiness, man in his physical variousness, man in his spiritual diversity serving the same master — Interest. The Interest of State, the Interest of Church, the Interest of God. Jeanne, serving God, alone of all has served herself, her systemic soul-and-body. She as the servant of herself becomes the everlasting, the others are left to weep upon the torment they have connived. The State alone (Warwick) remains unperturbed, save to halt the conflagration of Jeanne which threatens to burn down the power of England in Rouen. As no prologue was needed, no epilogue is asked for, and no commentary from the distance of several centuries. How superior to Shaw's Joan! The inferencse all embodied in the unit-structure, not tagging along like lose-threads, nor stressed like a moral to a fable. One fault alone disturbs the perfection of this grand film, a fault easily eliminated: there are too many captions, well written though they are.* Fewer captions jotted in the staccato brevity of many of the images that pass almost before one sees them—these would have better suited the film's, attitude, and not served to weaken (even if in the minutest degree, as the captions do at present) the demanding simplicity and rigorousness of this beautiful work.

Spectators at Jeanne's execution—showing treatment of facial texture.

The Passion of Jeanne d'Arc is an historical film, but not a costume film; an historical film that is contemporaneous in its universal references. *The Passion of Jeanne d'Arc* is a religious film, but not a sanctimonious film. Life, it urges, is transcendent. It is a transcendent film.

Directed by Carl Th. Dreyer. Photographed by Rudolph Matè. Starring Mlle. Falconetti. Scenario by Carl Th. Dreyer and Joseph Delteil. Distributed by Affiliated European Productions, Inc.

* Mr. Potamkin is, of course, referring to the French titles. The English titles are most effective.—Editor's note.

(*Continued from page* 6)

Forgotten Faces—Paramount.
Four Devils—Fox.
Four Sons—Fox.
Homecoming—Paramount.
The Last Command—Paramount.
The Last Moment—Zakoro.
Lonesome—Universal.
Looping the Loop—Paramount.
Lost in the Arctic—Fox.
The Loves of Casanova—Metro.
The Man Who Laughs—Universal.
The Noose—First National.

(*Continued on page* 13)

Ten Days That Shook the World

By James Shelley Hamilton

Mr. Hamilton was formerly one of the editors of our old Exceptional Photoplays Bulletin. While with "Everybody's" he was the first magazine film critic in New York City. With this review of S. M. Eisensten's latest film he renews his critical interest in the cinema.

THIS film is a picture of those days, so tremendous in Russian history, that finally established the Soviets.

It is a tremendous film. But it is probably more important as a step in the history of motion pictures than as a record of the history of Russia. The growth of the young man who created *Potemkin* is bound to be pretty closely tied up with the growth of this medium of speaking without tongue or words. While talking pictures are shooting up into whatever hybrid thing they are destined for, Eisenstein is still seeking more effective ways of addressing men's minds and emotions through the eye alone. Maybe he will experiment with sound also—he is too vigorously interested in what can be done to ignore any unexhausted possibilities. But *Ten Days* is silent. As silent as a blazing comet seen through a powerful telescope.

It gets its title from a book of John Reed's. It seems to have been intended for history, but anyone who accepts it for that is likely to be sadly confused and misled. Whoever it was who decided what could be told and what should be told, combined with the impossibility of telling so much anyway in so few thousand feet of film, is responsible for treating facts with a legerdemain curiously high-handed. The retroactive magic has even succeeded in deleting Trotsky from the triumph of the Soviets. But fortunately the quality of the picture makes the question of historical balance as unimportant as it is in reading "The French Revolution." One reads "The French Revolution" for Carlyle—one should look at *Ten Days* for Eisenstein.

Eisenstein has proclaimed that he does not want people to look for a further development of his *Potemkin* technique in this picture. He asserts that *Ten Days* is neither the same kind of thing nor yet a completely different kind of thing, and is therefore full of faults, just as a boy's voice is full of breaks when it is changing.

Whatever this means exactly, it is more apparent than ever that Eisenstein is more interested in ideas operating through masses of people than in individuals. *Potemkin* was about a mutiny on a battleship. This is about a revolution, on a huge, national scale. He is making a picture about the industrialization of rural life. One of his ambitions is said to be to make a picture of Marx's "Das Kapital." Obviously not a man to look to for romance or even tragedy in the ordinary sense of those words. A human being, to Eisenstein, seems to be no more than one of the pigments with which he gives color to his canvas. The picture he makes with these countless pigments is intensely human, but it is the farthest possible removed from the stories we are used to of lover and beloved, villainy and virtue: in fact, from all stories. Why, seems to think Eisenstein, amuse one's self with stories after all when there is the gigantic spectacle of universal forces to look at? He seems to begrudge even Lenin, his hero, a place as a definite individual in his picture. Lenin appears in surprisingly few scenes. It is the mass movement, either for or against what this hero represents, that interests the director.

Eisenstein's dynamic treatment of frieze effect.

It is not easy to adjust oneself to a thing of this kind, any more than for a person who has never read anything but magazine fiction to find himself at ease in "The Golden Bough." There are innumerable human bits—characteristics, incidents—but never one you can attach yourself to in sympathy and let yourself be carried along with. You have to remain aloof, with your mind active and no emotions to make everything easy for you. But when you have given up expecting it to be something that it isn't, you begin to find it astonishingly rich even in emotion. So rich that personal experience has found a seventh seeing of this picture more thrilling than the first.

It would be easy to dwell on various technicalities, or to describe any number of effective incidents. But to tell what Eisenstein accomplishes when he shows a tank being let down by a pulley, or Kerensky climbing a staircase, or by his continuous repetition of three successive views of the same object from different angles—this would be like gouging choice bits out of their proper place in a book and trying to give a preface weight with them. For the chief thing to be said about Eisenstein, after all, whether he tells stories or history or what not, is that he tells it with pictures, and describe as one may the effect of what he does, the actual thing done, like the blast of a trumpet or the smell of gunpowder, becomes weak and second-hand when one tries to reproduce it in words. By throwing away the potent emotional aids that go with stories evoking individual sympathy he has to depend solely on his cinematic expressiveness, and when he succeeds his success is all the more important. Whether or not, as he himself suggests, this picture belongs to an intermediate stage of Eisenstein's development, it is evidence enough, if any were needed after *Potemkin,* that Eisenstein is one of the great masters of the motion picture art, with a point of view that will probably take him along paths few others will care to venture on.

Directed by S. M. Eisenstein. Associate director, G. V. Alekxandrov. Photographed by E. T. Tysse. Produced by Sovkino of Moscow. Distributed by Amkino.

A Master of Cinema

SERGEI M. EISENSTEIN, the eminent director of *Potemkin* and *Ten Days That Shook the World,* is expected to visit this country in the near future. While coming primarily for the purpose of making a picture and studying our methods of film production he will probably also be interested in surveying our industrial civilization—the mass and the machine—for in this field Eisenstein has discovered a new world of artistic possibilities.

His visit cannot fail to be of the greatest interest to all American picture lovers, for whose information we are presenting a few biographical and critical details about this truly astonishing figure. For it must be remembered that with the two pictures mentioned above and *Strike,* his first picture which has not yet been shown in this country, Einstein has already achieved a world-wide reputation as an innovator in cinema art and as a man just past thirty holds the greatest promise for the future of any director living today.

Sergei M. Eisenstein

Eisenstein was born in Riga, Russia, in 1898, the son of a civil engineer. He was conventionally schooled to follow his father's career, though early fascinated by the circus and the little experimental theatre. After the civil war in Russia during which he served in the engineering corps, Eisenstein went to Moscow, armed with a knowledge of mathematics and architecture, an enthusiasm for Leonardo da Vinci and a great admiration for the abstraction of the Japanese theatre, but otherwise unknown. In Moscow he served a varied apprenticeship in the theatre, including playwrighting, growing more and more radical in his dramatic theories until he went quite beyond Meyerhold, at that time the leader of the revolutionary theatre in Russia. Finally, placed in charge of the "Protecult", the worker's theatre, he continued his radical experiments and already at that time applied his theory of *montage* to dramatic works, re-arranging the classical plays with modern interjections of circus buffoonade and always aiming at a greater fusion between the artist and the audience. His goal was the elimination of all theatrical artificiality with the result that he found his own theories driving him out of the theatre into—the motion picture! He became convinced that only in the medium of the cinema was complete detachment from artificiality possible. Today, for Eisenstein, the theatre is dead.

The first fruit of this departure was *Strike,* the earliest attempt at a mass film, in which there is no hero. Then, in 1925, followed *Potemkin,* in which the mass becomes the individual and the hero at once. In *Ten Days That Shook the World* an entirely new kind of cinema technique is perfected. Here Eisenstein achieves his purest cinematic effects which, according to him, the old technique failed to realize because it was on the wrong track of trying to project feelings directly. He says: "The cinema can make a far greater contribution and a far stronger impression by projecting matter and bodies than by project-

ing feels." He further declares that, "The intellectual cinema must be an entirely new form and create at the same time a synthesis of all the varieties of the cinema—emotional, pathetic pictures, actual newsreel and the absolute film." Just what he means by this will probably be made clear in his forthcoming picture *The General Line,* which deals with agricultural life.

The work of Eisenstein shows considerable indebtedness to the earlier pictures of our own D. W. Griffith, notably *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance.* Leon Moussinac, the French cinema critic who has just published a book on the Russian cinema, writes as follows: "Eisenstein, like Griffith, uses eternal and simple contrast in the struggle of beauty and ugliness, past and present, truth and error. He employs all the arts to exalt the masses, which naturally determines the choice of his film subjects. He is like Griffith in his care for detail, but as the strength of his rhythm bears everything before it his care in composition is directed less towards the perfection of the ensemble than towards the precision of its unity.

"Eisenstein has passed beyond Griffith in his greater capacity, a saner and better rounded mind which does not hesitate to espouse the best of the foreign methods in evoking historical realities already past. He feels that both the psychological dramas and the drama of individual existence are exceeded by the living realities of the social drama of the world today. The field of Eisenstein is collective and his personality fits itself to that.

"Eisenstein's technique is at once sophisticated and very simple, in his calculation of the smallest elements of which he makes use. Above all he has vigor of expression. He photographs from all angles in order to secure the best possible effects and leaves as little as possible to chance.

"In each part of his films he has endeavored to have you forget the acting of the cast and the artificial studio composition of black and white in order to approach as nearly as possible to actuality, to images recognizable as living and interpreted by the objectivity and mechanism of the camera. Therefore the variety of the camera angles and his use of opposing planes which give so much life to some of his sequences. He rarely shows a general view of an ensemble, preferring to suggest it by the presentation of its most characteristic details, as in *Potemkin* in the scenes showing the revolt on the ship, the clearing of the decks for action, and the Oddessa Massacre."

A word as to the meaning of the word *montage.* This is rather a difficult term to translate. Essentially it means the process of quick cross and back cutting which gives a picture its dynamic quality above and beyond its ordinary cinematic movement. Montage enters into the assembling of a picture after the camera work is completed and serves to emphasize by quick repetition or by breaking up the flow of a sequence by flashing—in visual associations to what has gone before. It also helps to make the picture seem like a single unified experience by making the past overlap into the present and even projecting into the future. Griffith undoubtedly used the principle of *montage* in his two greatest historical pictures but apparently dropped the method in favor of the leisurely narrative technique of most contemporary pictures. This neglect of *montage* led to a temporary arresting of true cinematic development which Eisenstein's technique is now remedying.

(*Continued from page* 9)

The Patriot—Paramount.
The Racket—Paramount.
The Raider Emden—Columbia.
Sadie Thompson—United Artists.
Show People—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
Simba—Motion Picture Capital Prod.
Sins of the Fathers—Paramount.
Sorrell and Son—United Artists.
Speedy—Paramount.
The Strange Case of Captain Ramper—First National.
The Street Angel—Fox.
The Submarine—Columbia.
The Tempest—United Artists.
Three Sinners—Paramount.
The Trail of '98—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
The Trial of Donald Westhof—Ufa.
We Americans—Universal.
The Wedding March—Paramount.
White Shadows in the South Seas—Metro.
The Wind—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
The Yellow Pass—Amkino.

Let the Director Direct

By J. D. Williams

We are very glad to print this interesting article by Mr. J. D. Williams, former General Manager of Assoc. First National Pictures, Inc.; now Executive Vice President of World Wide Pictures. Mr. Williams is a veteran of the industry and a man of very decided ideas on which he has a way of making good. Here he gives us his opinion of the effect of the supervisor system both upon the silent and the talking picture.—Editor's Note.

INDIVIDUALLY produced pictures under the unit system, with an unhampered director in charge, or mass-made product turned out of factory studios with a supervisor challenging the artistic integrity of the man who should be responsible, is one of the most important questions confronting the picture industry at the present day. This issue has of course been the subject of much controversy between the business and the creative forces in whose hands the making of pictures lies.

It is a question upon which I feel very strongly. And I may perhaps claim to speak with some authority here, when it is remembered that as former manager of First National Pictures I encouraged Charles Chaplin and Mary Pickford to strike out for themselves as individual producers, which made them free of the supervisor system, and that later on I was instrumental in persuading Douglas Fairbanks and Harold Lloyd to follow the same course. In other words I have always been for the director as against the supervisor. And I believe that anybody who knows the history of the industry will admit that those directors have gone furthest in the creating of artistic pictures who have been given most freedom. They survived on the basis of their own responsibility and are still in the front line of directors. That is after all the acid test.

The first essential of a good picture is that it should be properly directed. By "properly directed" I simply mean that it should be entrusted to an individual whose artistic integrity shall not be unduly subject to a dictator. When that individual has a certain conception of how that picture can best be realized in terms of the screen the bickering and objections of a supervisor can only result in inferior work.

There is another disadvantage. When a picture so produced is criticised the director has his alibi. He can turn around and blame the supervisor. But if the director has been unhampered and still the picture is poor, it is common sense to get rid of him.

The best argument I have heard against individual production is that directors without control are too extravagant; that they do not have enough business experience to keep down costs. That is a weak argument which applies to any industry. It is a matter of the survival of the fittest. If directors do not have enough foresight to stem the tide and control their finances, then they must go under.

If these considerations apply to the silent pictures, the unit or individual method of making talking pictures must surely follow. In fact I am almost willing to predict that within three years or even sooner this method will be exclusively adopted for producing talking photoplays.

For this type of picture lends itself even more to individual production than the silent photoplay. In making the talking picture, the director must be the real head, for after it is produced, it cannot be torn to pieces and revamped by a staff of experts as is done with most silent pictures.

All sorts of brains go into the silent picture after it has been photographed, but with the so-called "talkie" the job is completed as it progresses from day to day; there is little or no opportunity for the cutter, editor, and title writer after the "shooting" has been completed. Consequently the director must be a man of genius, and experience, who cannot, and will not be dictated to for it is upon his shoulders alone that the responsibility rests and it is up to him whether the picture is a success or a failure.

He cannot, and should not, accept the responsibility unless he is given a free hand; unless he is left alone to choose his staff, his players and the thousand and one details that

make for a successful production. If he is competent enough to be able to produce entertaining pictures, which means productions for the box office, he will not be dictated to.

In Hollywood there are three or four men who dictate the quality and class of seventy-five per cent of the silent pictures. These men have under them forty or fifty directors who make whatever pictures they are ordered to make.

This system will not work with talking pictures, for the reason that no director of reputation is going to shoulder the success or failure of a picture, and make it contrary to his own judgment, knowing that it cannot possibly be changed after it is finished.

Also in view of the fact that the playwright is responsible for the dialogue in his play, he is surely going to have more influence as regards the dialogue in his talking picture. These two instances cited will require considerably more producing talents than in the present method of making silent pictures.

Suppose in the publishing world, for instance, that fifteen or twenty great authors had to write books to suit a few publishers who would dictate the kind of novels they wanted written.

The answer to that is that the public would soon get tired of reading a certain kind of book and the authors would soon be up in arms and refuse to submit to any such dictation. Isn't it far better for an author to write the kind of stories he is best suited to write? I don't think it admits of any argument. How much more important, then, for a director to be permitted to really direct the kind of picture suited to his talent and genius. The literary world would never have made the progress it has, if it had had to settle down to the supervising system that now controls the silent drama.

Take twenty different competent playwrights or directors and put them with twenty different companies. Place everyone of them on his individual merit, unhampered by any supervisor, and with his own units. Give him absolute control, with full say of what shall go in and what shall not go in an individual picture. You will get five times better quality of production from each of the twenty working this way than you would if working by the supervised factory method.

I know this viewpoint is rather reactionary in the business and a great many producers do not believe it will work out, but it will be proven in the near future that the individual unit in making talking pictures will be the practical and business-like method of production.

WHEN a print of a motion picture is received in Japan and before it can be submitted to the imperial government's censor a speaker's book must be prepared. This entails translation into a language that is foreign to English of such titles as "His buddy double-crossed him and squealed to the hi-jacker," "She seemed to melt in his arms," and "He banged one off the right field and nose-dived into third on a squeeze play." When the film is censored and the speaker's book has been scanned for "dangerous thoughts" the Japanese talkie is ready for the theatre. On the left of the screen facing the audience stands a pulpit affair in which a worthy and honorable gentleman known as the speaker sits. He is chosen for his elocution ability and is invariably recruited from the legitimate stage. He talks continually through the run of the picture, explaining in every detail the action of the picture and most vividly interpreting the dialogue of the players. This chap is most moving, he can make his audience cry like children, his deep guttural sounds seem to come when most needed in the tragic scenes, then he purrs like a kitten and talks rapidly when the love scenes come. The speaker starts quietly. He brings his hearers along slowly, gradually employing a manner of speech that impresses them. Suddenly, with a mighty effort he relates something about the villain and with so much emphasis that the people in the audience feel like taking a potshot at the brute. The Japanese by this time display a true samurai spirit. They are ready to fight and they declare their views in no uncertain terms. The premier speakers in Japan have as many followers as the stars and celebrities in America. Many a poor picture has been boosted into a number one position by these gentlemen.

The Problem Picture

THE American screen has long been distinguished for its many-sided technical excellence, its willingness to spare no costs to achieve any desired effect, its general go-getter attitude. The settings, the photography, the smoothness of continuity, the physical brilliance of the actors, the general directorial efficiency, have lifted it to its high level.

In what respect then have American pictures been open to criticism? Has not the trouble lain largely in the theme, the subject matter, of an otherwise so expertly produced result? Surely if the same competence had been devoted to the script, there would have been another story to tell.

The theme of the motion picture, except in rare cases, has remained at an infantile level. That has been its real infantilism, in more and more glaring contrast to the growth of its technical facilities. The progress of the medium of expression and the triviality of the thing to be expressed sum up the situation.

This has not been the case in any other art. On the stage, for instance, greater technical resource has stimulated the dramatist to treat more mature themes and the three dramatic periods which we know best have culminated in a Sophocles, a Shakespeare and an Ibsen.

Maria Corda in "A Woman in the Night"

It is high time that the motion picture, within the limitations of its necessarily popular appeal should seek to rectify the discrepancy between its means and their better use if it is to capture that large intelligent audience which rarely goes to see pictures or hold its present audience.

Towards that end *A Woman in the Night* makes a small but valiant beginning. Properly speaking this picture is the equivalent of a problem play in which a thesis is dramatically expounded and a conclusion arrived at. Ibsen's "A Doll House," some of the earlier Shaw plays and most of M. Brieux's attempts to promote a better social order through the medium of the stage, are cases in point. The screen, so passionately devoted to providing nothing but entertainment, has rarely ventured into this field. But with *A Woman in the Night* the problem picture as a type has arrived.

Here we have the screen boldly tackling the problem of a childless couple with the husband desiring issue in order to carry on a long train of father to son traditions while the woman no less passionately seeks to satisfy her maternal cravings. When no child comes after many years of happy union a great unrest, with inevitable suspicions, seizes upon the couple. An insinuation has been carefully planted at the beginning of the picture that the fault may be the husband's, due to shell shock during the war. But on this subject, as the wife discovers when she consults her husband's doctor and old friend, medical science cannot be positive.

Confronted with the possible insanity of her husband the wife solves the problem in her own way. We need not enter into that solution here except to commend the entirely right and human gesture, as it seems to us, with which the husband reconciles himself to the situation. We are not interested here in the details of the plot nor in taking sides. The important point for the future of the screen is that such a picture should have been made at all. For *A Woman in the Night,* not judged from the point of view of empty perfections of technique, courageously takes a step forward towards making people both think and look when they go to a motion picture theatre.

Directed by Victor Saville, Photographed by Werner Brandes, Starring Maria Corda. From the novel by Countess Barcynska. Distributed by World Wide Pictures, Inc.

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

THE Motion Picture Committee of the Rhode Island State Federation of Women's Clubs is starting a most interesting and successful year as indicated by Mrs. George Harrison, State Motion Picture Chairman. The broadcastings are being continued twice a month from station W E A N and Mrs. Harrison is sending out forty-one bulletins a week. These are posted in libraries, the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., the Girls' City Club, the Republican Women's Club, the American Home Makers, Inc., Kingston College and sent to the chairmen of motion pictures of Federated Clubs for club use. During the holiday week the Federation and the Rhode Island Congress of Parents and Teachers co-operated with Mr. Sol Braunig, manager of the Majestic Theatre of Providence, and with Mr. M. G. Cullen, manager of the Loew's State Theatre of Providence, by endorsing and recommending the very fine programs these managers arranged. At the Majestic Theatre *The Air Circus* and the lovely movietone special *Forget-Me-Not* were shown, and at the Loew's State Theatre *The Cameraman* and one of *Our Gang* comedies with special music. All six of the managers of the Providence theatres seemed to be vieing with one another to have fine programs for the holiday season and the organizations felt it would be better to encourage these splendid bills rather than put on a special program of their own. It has always been their policy to encourage and back the regular manager in his efforts to give the public the finest pictures rather than put on special bills. The Federation feels that such programs as have been mentioned should receive support and commendation.

IN line with its policy of presenting to the children of Macon (Ga.) pictures which are entertaining, educational and timely and its practice of co-operating with all organizations in presenting programs which will fit in with the plans of these various organizations, the Macon Better Films Committee has arranged a matinee with Grand Opera week in mind. Two short features will be shown, *William Tell,* being the story of his life and the establishment of the first modern republic, Switzerland, and *The Last Rose of Summer,* a picturization of Moore's immortal classic, which in the opera "Martha", Lady Harriet sings to Lionel. Immediately preceding the screening of the latter a chorus selected from the Alexander II school will sing the old Irish ballad. The prologue will be a dance, group classique, by pupils of Merrymakers' Retreat given to the music of the Baccarolle from the "Tales of Hoffman." Other pictures on the program are one of the fascinating stereoscopics, a colored, third dimensional picture to see which are used green and red eye glasses; a comedy drama full of thrills and athletic stunts, and the final chapter of the exciting serial, *Scotty of the Scouts.* Chaperones for the morning are to be members of one of the music clubs and the ushers will be a group of the students from the junior department of the Wesleyan Conservatory of Music. The officers of the Grand Opera Association, the Scott-Mansfield Players and any of the grand opera stars who should happen to be in the city are to be the guests of honor.

MRS. EDMUND M. BARSHAM, chairman of the Motion Picture Committee of the Delaware State Federation of Women's Clubs called a meeting early in January of chairmen of the motion picture committees of the local State federated clubs to discuss plans in regard to motion picture work. Not only were the chairmen invited to attend but also all the persons interested in having the best in films for Wilmington. Chairmen of the motion picture committees appointed by presidents outside the city were also urged to attend the meeting, if possible, because of its educational value both for theatre programs work and for proposed legislative work later in the season. At the meeting it was voted to organize a study club with some workable plan and Mrs. Barsham is already at work gathering information and preparing for the launching of her state programs.

Junior Matinees In Birmingham

MRS. JOHN YEATMAN, chairman of junior matinees for the Better Films Committee of Birmingham, Alabama, is most enthusiastic in her report of the success of the matinees. The first matinees of the season which launched the third year of these successful matinees was given absolutely free to the children of Birmingham by the Better Films Committee, the theatre, the stage hands, operators and organist of the theatre. The feature for this first matinee was *The Frontier Trail*. The theatre was filled to capacity with eager, happy children and as two hundred were turned away, tickets were given to these for the next matinee.

The Boy and Girl Scouts act as ushers each Saturday and it is an inspiring sight to see them march down the aisle with the flag and give the oath of allegiance. The committee feels it is most fortunate this year in securing the services of Miss Nell Esslinger to conduct the singing at the beginning of the program. Miss Esslinger is donating her services and time because she is genuinely interested and her enthusiasm and pep are a real incentive to the children to join in lustily in the singing. Miss Esslinger is well qualified for this work as she was formerly a soloist in the "Little Church Around the Corner" and is now a vocal teacher in this city. The prologues are furnished by different persons. The first one was put on by the children of the South Highland school. The chaperones come from the P.-T. A. and some of the clubs. Each month a prize of ten dollars is given the P.-T. A. having the largest attendance for the month. One phase of the work is especially interesting and that is that each Saturday the Better Films Committee entertains the underprivileged children at these matinees and they are brought in from the Mercy Home in cars sent for them. Mrs. L. B. Thompson is chairman of the committee to secure sufficient cars to bring and return the children to Mercy Home.

The pictures shown through December the fifteenth were:

Oct. 27—*Square Crooks,* Movietone News and second episode of *Scotty of the Scouts.*
Nov. 3—*The Great Love.*
Nov. 10—*Speedy.*
Nov. 17—*Take It From Me.*
Nov. 24—*Freckles.*
Dec. 1—*Now We're In The Air.*
Dec. 8—*Wings of the Storm.*
Dec. 15—*Just Suppose.*

The question has been raised—why give the children matinees when it entails so much forethought and detail work and when there are already so many pictures to be seen? But are all of these pictures suitable for your child and mine? Decidedly not, and wise parents find that if the children are allowed to attend too many shows, they too often lack patience to read, as they wish to get things in a few minutes. Your support of good pictures means more and better pictures. Co-operation will accomplish more than denunciation and teaching the children to choose their pictures with discrimination is the wisest course. If there is a demand for suitable films for young people the producers will make them. Training the children to select their own entertainment and training parents to select and supervise their children's amusements would be a great thing for future generations. It is generally agreed that the responsibility must definitely rest with the parents, first of determining at what age their children shall begin attending the movies and second of selecting the pictures which their boys and girls shall see. Parents are urged to send their children to the special junior matinees instead of allowing a promiscuous attendance during school days. Many thoughtless parents have allowed their children to go to the movies day after day without knowledge of the picture being shown at that time. Because of this very fact, the need of the regular junior matinee is all the more urgent. We feel that the Better Films Committee in co-operation with the P.-T. A., the Federated Clubs, the Boy and Girl Scouts and other organizations interested in the welfare of the younger generation are doing a piece of constructive work with these matinees. In conclusion be it said that the Better Films Committee feels that it has succeeded in its efforts. There is still much work to do to further increase the usefulness of the screen and to make it in fact and in truth an instrument of human good and public service, and the junior matinees here for three years are but the stepping stones to achieve this end.

THE Miami (Fla.) Better Films Council made a very wise move in arranging a managers' luncheon as part of their year's program. The report shows excellent results. The managers of all Miami theatres, meeting with the Better Films Council, offered their co-operation in the movement for better films and expressed their appreciation for the work of the council, whose aim is selection of better pictures, not censorship. The meeting, which was presided over by Mrs. David B. Koger, president of the council, was the first time in Miami that exhibitors and council members had gathered together to discuss motion picture exhibition problems. Several of the managers spoke on the problems that confronted them, and Mrs. Koger outlined the position of the council as a mediator between the public and the producer for better pictures and greater appreciation by the public of good pictures. Representatives of Miami civic clubs, who form the council, were present. Dr. E. A. King, representing the Ministerial Association of Miami, and Charles M. Fisher, Superintendent of Schools, stated their appreciation of the work of the council. Mrs. Porter Langston, who recently returned from a trip to New York told of the work of the National Board of Review. Leading Miamians are to be invited to previews of outstanding films to be shown in Miami playhouses and movie matinees for school children are to be arranged.

BETWEEN twelve and fifteen hundred persons witnessed the first Community Night held under the auspices of the Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee at the Rivoli Theatre early in December. Mrs. Harry G. Grover, President of the Committee, was enthusiastic over the results of the evening's program. Members of the Rutherford Little Theatre Guild co-operated in the project by presenting on the stage "Thompson's Luck," a play written by Director Harry G. Grover of the Guild. Mr. Grover directed the production which was recently one of three plays presented on a single bill by the Guild. *Potemkin,* adjudged an exceptional photoplay by the National Board of Review, was shown on the screen. It is the tale of the Russian Revolution of 1905, concerning principally a mutiny on an armored cruiser, the Potemkin. The motion picture part of the program continued with *And How,* a photoplay written, acted and filmed by the Amateur Cinema League of the Oranges (N. J.). This film won a five hundred dollar prize from Photoplay Magazine. Members of the Committee were guests of William E. Waldron, manager of the theatre for the evening. Several of the officers acted as a reception group, welcoming the audience as they entered the theatre.

MRS. R. R. PURCELL, Chairman of the Better Films Committee, Floral Park, Long Island, New York, reports that the Committee opened its fifth season of Saturday morning matinees for children on November the third with a splendid program—*The Eagle's Nest,* a nature study produced by Ufa, Our Gang in *Ten Years Old* and as the feature *Heart to Heart.* The matinees are sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Association and have proved most successful as witnessed by the attendance of five hundred at the opening performance. The matinees are held every Saturday morning in the Floral Theatre, the manager booking the programs, from the list provided by the Motion Picture Committee of the P.-T. A., attending to all details and giving the P.-T. A. ten per cent of the proceeds. The Association furnishes the chaperones and takes care of all the publicity. One program consisted of Harold Lloyd in *Speedy* together with *Little Snow White.* Contrary to current reports of our ultra-sophisticated modern children *Little Snow White* proved as exciting and enthralling to the children as the wildest western ever did. Other features the children have enjoyed were *The Wright Idea, Hot News, The Cameraman, Tracked, The Glorious Trail* and *Warming Up. Peter Pan* again furnished the joy of the Christmas week matinee.

THE Philomusian Women's Club of West Philadelphia (Pa.) is conducting a movement for better motion pictures for children. The club has arranged to have juniors' matinees and the pictures to be shown have all been carefully reviewed by a committee under the supervision of the State Federation. At these matinees members of the club will act as chaperones.

Junior Review Work

WHEN we select pictures for young people what assurance have we that we are judging from the viewpoint of the young peoples' appreciation of pictures rather than the viewpoints of what we think young people should think about pictures. The best way to help in this understanding is to get reactions from the young people themselves and the enterprising Better Films Committee of Rutherford (N. J.) has instigated some such idea. As a part of their Review Committee they have a Junior Review Committee. The idea is yet young but Mrs. R. A. Hopkins, Chairman of the Review Committee, has many plans for its development.

Some of the pictures commented upon in recent Junior Committee ballots were *Lilac Time, Glorious Betsy, Four Sons* and *Potemkin*. One young miss in sending in her ballot on *Lilac Time* gave the following careful comment—"The picture was rather sentimental. Colleen Moore is a much better comedian than dramatic actress. The picture was rather long drawn out. The audience seemed inclined to laugh or snicker during some of the more dramatic moments. Comedy touches were good." She included also a letter as follows, "My dear Mrs. Hopkins—I am sending in my first reviewer's ballot. I want to thank you for giving me this privilege. I am interested in this kind of work and I am going to enjoy it a lot." Another young lady commenting on the same picture "did not care for some of Colleen Moore's facial expressions," although she considered the picture worth recommending as time and money well spent. She says of a Collegian picture which supplemented the feature—"I like the Collegian Series with the exception that a person who has seen one, always knows how the next one is going to end. I do not think that there is enough variation." A lad of thirteen and a half liked especially the work of the Napoleon character in *Glorious Betsy*. Incidentally while he comments favorably on the picture he would recommend it for the adult audience, evidently considering himself so. The picture *Four Sons* was approved by one youngster for he says "the acting of the mother was excellent" but he adds that "it was a very long picture" and also that "some things were put in that were not connected with the story." Another report on the picture gave "excellent directing but poor ending." But this young man thought "the music was not very good." *Potemkin* was recommended "for mature audience and high school people." Perhaps the study of a number of such ballots will offer some enlightenment on the much disputed question of audience suitability.

This same committee has given us another interesting piece of work by a young person in regard to picture analysis. It is an English composition class review from a student of the Dickinson High School of Jersey City (N. J.). In fact it is so outstanding we believe it should be printed here.

ALIAS JIMMY VALENTINE—90%

Alias Jimmy Valentine, a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production, directed by Jack Conway, and presented at the Astor Theatre, New York City.

The Cast

Jimmy Valentine.....William Haines
Doyle .....Lionel Barrymore
Rose .....Leila Hyams
Swede .....Carl Dane
Avery .....Tully Marshall
Mister Lane.....Howard Hickman
Bobby .....Billy Bates
Little Sister.....Evelyn Mills

To begin with, I have neither had the good fortune to have previously seen the Broadway play on which this picture is based, nor a screen version of it, starring Bert Lytell, which was produced quite a while ago. The Broadway play had one cash customer less in me, because at the time of its premiere, I had not yet seen the light of day (1910). The first film version was not graced with my presence, for the simple reason that I was not present at any of its showings.

Thus, since I made no attempt at cognizance, this absolute ignorance of the plot greatly furthered the possibility of my enjoying this comedy drama immensely. In fact, provided you have no previous knowledge of the story, should anyone attempt to narrate anything relative to the plot to you, before you have seen the photoplay, I would then recommend this formal procedure on your part—a

well-mannered left hook followed up by a politely executed right uppercut to the jaw, which would, I believe, put at least a temporary termination to his obnoxious intention.

The snappy direction of Jack Conway is the best of its type that I have ever seen. It likewise follows that the continuity and adaptation by Sara Y. Mason and A. P. Younger, respectively, are excellent. Also in for a share of the honors is Joe Farnham, who wrote the titles which provide for at least half of the laughs in this picture. And, lest we forget, Paul Armstrong, the author, must be given due credit for having had an excellent idea when he wrote the play.

As for the performance, I must laud William Haines for his portrayal of Valentine, which, I believe I can state without fear of contradiction, is the best work he has ever done in front of a camera. Lionel Barrymore gets second honors; he does not seem to come into his own until the talking sequence, to which the last reel of this picture is devoted. Honorable mention goes, in the following order, to the excellent performances given by Tully Marshall, Carl Dane, Leila Hyams, Howard Hickman and the two children Billy Bates and Evelyn Mills.

The photography and settings are for the most part excellent.

This ace of comedy dramas is, in my opinion, marred by but one fault of significant importance, and whether it is a fault is a matter of debate, since it is of a psychological nature. Due to the fact that I am a firm believer in the old adage, "Once a crook, always a crook," it seems practically impossible that Valentine, a dyed-in-the-wool crook, could reform, which feat he accomplishes in the story.

The audience reacted very favorably to the picture, especially in its comedy sequences.

Summing it up, I would advise you to hotfoot it to the Astor Theatre as soon as possible.

BENJAMIN SINAKIN.

Better Films Committees and schools may find through these young people's reviews a way to link their work for the mutual good and interest both of their activities and the young people of the community. These young people make up a large part of the movie audiences and their "moviemindedness" might be used to constructive advantage in review work, contests and essays.

THE following editorial from the Harrisburg (Pa.) Patriot indicates the interest shown in the juniors' matinees recently inaugurated in that city—"The Civic Club's experiment with special movies for children seems to have been a genuine success. In the State Theatre on the first Saturday morning, more than eight hundred youngsters sat and watched a film story built especially for young minds. Ladies of the Civic Club were on hand as hostesses. Girl and Boy Scouts played their part as ushers. Everything fitted nicely into the program which is designed to attract the attention of children to the better type and away from the films unsuitable for juvenile minds. The project certainly deserves to win. Nothing could be more appropriate than to direct child attention to moving pictures of the right sort. The "movies" are such an established institution that it is absurd to try and deny them to children. Since there are movies and movies, the sensible thing seems to be to encourage youngsters to see the better ones and forget the others. Any person, parent or other, who can co-operate with the Civic Club in its present enterprise, may do so with the knowledge that it is in the interest of children."

THE Junior Movie Committee of the Troy (N. Y.) Federation of the Parent-Teacher Associations arranged for the presentation of *Four Sons* for one of their recent Saturday morning matinees. This picture was held over for the performance as it would ordinarily have closed Friday night. The students matinee held in Knoxville (Tenn.) not so long ago had on its program *Making Lead Pencils, Dates, a New American Fruit Crop, Up the Stikine River* and several numbers given by the Elks Junior Orchestra. Another of their programs consisted of a travel picture, *Naples and Vesuvius, Wooly West* and the *Orange Industry*. The Columbia (S. C.) Better Films Committee had as their attraction at a late matinee the following program—*Man Without a Face* (serial), *The Vanishing Pioneer,* Paramount News, *The Knights of the Air* and *The Camera Man*. The football squad were invited to be the special guests of the Better Films Committee and the Columbia high school songs were the feature of the community singing.

THE Three Arts League of Columbus (Ga.) has recently added a motion picture department to its other interesting activities. It is the intention to boost the good pictures and ignore the bad which is in line with the primary object of this organization—that of bringing to Columbus entertainment of the highest type. Mrs. Banks Yonge is chairman of the new Motion Picture Department of the League and her committee will have a membership of thirty. They propose to review the first run pictures of the theatres, to endorse the exceptional and selected pictures and to have at least one invitational showing a month of such outstanding pictures as *Czar Ivan, the Terrible*, which was the picture for their first showing held last month.

A NEW committee whose plans are already spreading over a wide scope of endeavor is the recently formed Motion Picture Committee of the Grant School P.-T. A., Westfield (N. J.). This committee is composed of a group of earnest workers, women who realize that children love the "movies" and that a large majority of them go there at every opportunity and are admitted alone, in spite of the law regarding minors. One of the first changes which this new committee plans to put into effect is the assembling of all unchaperoned children in one section of the theatre, these youngsters to have the supervision of one of the ushers. Clean, wholesome pictures, those of travel, comic and historical nature will be one of the aims for a special children's matinee on Saturday mornings. Westfield may also have a "community night." These are only a few of the plans arranged but in general the committee hopes to make the motion pictures in their community as ideal as possible.

"FOR over three years," writes Mrs. Walter Willard, of Germantown (Pa.), "as State Chairman of Motion Pictures for the Federation of Pennsylvania Women, I have made a careful and exhaustive study of the movie, and I would say that the thing that is wrong with it is the lack of discrimination on the part of its patrons. It is true that pictures like *The Covered Wagon, The Big Parade, Wings, Seventh Heaven* and a few like them are financial successes, but until the public generally will accept this type, realizing its artistic worth, the gush and mush will continue to draw the crowds. We of the State Federation are not trying to reform the world; we recognize the impossibility of that. But we are trying to create in the coming generation an appreciation of what is fine and good. In eighteen theatres throughout the State, children's matinees are held on Saturday mornings. We have tried to make them unique in many ways. The pictures shown have plenty of action, good fun as well as educational value, and we are succeeding in doing what we set out to do. We have tested and found that the children who go to our special matinees have no desire for the other type."

THE Atlanta (Ga.) Better Films Committee has found a novel way to increase the attendance at its special children's matinees. A recent announcement says "Big Boy" balloons will be given, one to each child who brings to the matinee some other child who has not previously attended. To get a balloon, the name, address and telephone number of the new visitor must be presented on a sheet of paper, together with the name of the friend who brought him. Another new idea of this committee is the formation of a club for the New Year. Saturday morning, December the twenty-ninth, marked the beginning of the "Junior Matinee Club" and everyone who has been a regular attendant at the matinees since last May was urged to be there and become a charter member.

THE Decatur (Ga.) Better Films Committee enjoys the distinction of combining the interests of every organization in Decatur. Any organization which sells tickets to their regular Monday matinees is allowed to keep half the proceeds.

THE Miami (Fla.) Better Films Council has many unique plans for arousing and continuing the interest of the young people in the juniors' matinees. One of the late schemes is that of the poster contest. Each week the contest will be allotted to a different school and a prize will be awarded by the Better Films Council for the best poster announcement of the juniors' matinee of the current week.

Holiday Matinees in Many Cities

"ISN'T it just the cu-u-u-test thing you ever saw!" a dainty, little lady, aged eight, shook her golden curls in ecstacy as she commented on the Christmas matinee presented by the Charlotte News (Charlotte, N. C.) in co-operation with the Charlotte Better Films Committee and the P.-T. A., and the eight hundred children who attended were evidently of the same opinion from their enthusiastic applause. The picture which added so much to their Christmas joy was *Santa Claus,* a film which had the snow scenes actually photographed in the Arctic regions. This was supplemented by *Old Ironsides,* a picture based upon the records of this historic old man-'o-war. Another holiday matinee which gave untold pleasure was the one arranged in Knoxville (Tenn.) for the children of the Knox County Industrial School, St. John's Orphanage and the Strong Mission Home. The children were shown Harold Lloyd in *Hot Water,* a short comedy, and were entertained with a solo dance and a Christmas story and Christmas Carols were sung by the Boyd Junior High School while to cap the climax Santa Claus was at the theatre to give every child a treat. Norfolk (Va.) was literally populated with youthful Sherlock Holmes during Christmas week and the cause for this great increase in the detective force was the unique matinee which was held in that city. The price of admission was a toy, regardless of its state, because however battered it was it brought joy to some child who would have otherwise have had a cheerless Christmas. The feature picture was Harold Lloyd in *Grandma's Boy* and in addition there were several short subjects and a two reel comedy and last but not least was the song festival. Similar to this matinee was the one held in Spartanburg (S. C.) where a bag of fruit was the price of admission and this was given to the Salvation Army for their Christmas baskets. The children of New Haven (Conn.) were shown *Peter Pan, Santa Claus* and a comedy that was made for laughs only. After the matinee Santa Claus presented each child with a box of candy much to his delight. The sponsors of this affair were the members of the American Legion. The Junior Film and Entertainment Guild of Albany (N. Y.) held their annual Christmas party in the Harmanus Bleecker Hall with a section reserved for the children from the institutions. The Y. W. C. A. presented their Christmas pageant, Christmas carols were sung by the Junior Monday Musical Club, professional and amateur dancing acts were put on and Mayor Thatcher was present to greet the children. Santa Claus, himself, in person, was the guest of honor at the annual Christmas party given by the Atlanta (Ga.) Better Films Committee at the Palace Theatre. He showed the children views of his work shop at the North Pole where he was busy during the past months making toys for the Atlanta kiddies and told them of his recent arrival in Atlanta by aeroplane. Twin Christmas trees beautifully decorated adorned the stage where a most interesting yuletide prologue was given, special features symbolic of the festival season and the wonderful film *A Visit to Santa Claus Land,* the hit of the matinee, were shown. The Christmas party of the Better Films Committee itself was no less a success than the one they planned for the children. It was in the form of a luncheon and was held at the Henry Grady Hotel with fifty members present. Holiday favors were at each place and a forfeit committee threatened penalties on anyone not entering into the spirit of the occasion. Miss Mildred Seydell gave a most interesting talk on the Christmas customs in France, Germany, Belgium, Spain and Italy. Mrs. Earle Quillian sang a group of charming songs, and there were several unique surprise features. The Jacksonville (Fla.) Better Films Council offered the children of their city a most enjoyable Christmas matinee with the price of admission being a toy for the Happy Heart's Club Christmas Tree, as likewise did the Columbia (S. C.) Better Films Committee. The matinee guests were given fruit and the program ended with the good old fashion custom of singing Christmas carols. This Christmas season seemed to have been one of most unusual activity and may the New Year be one of much success for the various organizations which are carrying on this work.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
FRANCES C. BARRETT

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Mature audience. Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE:—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the second classification.

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

The Barker

Directed by ..... *George Fitzmaurice*
Featuring ..... *Milton Sills*, *Dorothy Mackaill*
Play by Kenyon Nicholson

COLORFUL story of small time circus life. Nifty Miller, the barker of the outfit, is anxious to keep his son away from circus associations and is very disappointed when he leaves law school and joins the troupe. His former sweetheart seeks revenge for having been discarded and offers to pay one of the circus girls if she will vamp the young boy. Lou, as she is called, offers to do the job but ends by falling in love with young Miller. When Nifty finds out what has been going on he discharges Lou and takes to drink over what he considers his son's ruined career. However, the son makes good and Nifty again yields to the lure of the circus. The picture is vividly told and acted and the talking sequences are unusually good.

For the family audience including young people. (First National—9 reels)

Interference

Directed by ..... *Lothan Mendes*
Featuring ..... *Evelyn Brent*, *Clive Brook*, *William Powell*, *Doris Kenyon*
Stage play by Roland Putnam and Harold Dearlan

AN all talking picture making clever use of sound devices and well told by a good cast. It is a dramatic story of love and revenge. Jealous of another woman's power over the man she loves, a woman avenges herself by blackmail. In possession of love letters written by the other woman before she was married to her present husband, she extracts large sums of money from her by threatening to tell her husband. The man in the case poisons the blackmailer and restores the letters to their author, then gives himself up when the woman and her husband become involved in the matter through suspicion.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—7 reels)

Linda

Directed by ..... *Mrs. Wallace Reid*
Featuring ..... *Helen Foster*
Original screen story by M. P. Montague

A YOUNG girl is forced by her father to marry a lumber jack much older than herself just when she has fallen in love with another man. Her husband dimly realizes that he cannot get very near to his sensitive, romantic wife but treats her with every consideration. When another woman turns up and claims to be his wife, she leaves him and goes to the city to a woman who had be-

friended her. Here the little lumber camp girl receives an education and again encounters the man with whom she has fallen in love. But when she hears that her uncouth husband is ill, she returns to him. She learns that the other woman was an imposter. Later a lumber accident mercifully makes the way clear for her marrying the man she loves. The acting of Helen Foster has a strong appeal and the general atmosphere of the picture is one of honest realism.

For the mature audience.

(Willis-Kent Productions—7 reels)

The Little Wildcat

Directed by .....*Ray Enright*
Featuring .....*Audrey Ferris*
Original screen story by Gene Wright

A ROMANCE of the South with a new twist. Two sisters, granddaughters of a southern veteran, set their caps in rivalry at every young man who comes to the house. Grandpa, now risen to wealth, was only a private during the Civil War, while his old friend used to be his captain. Now the situation of priority reverses. The former captain is a privileged servitor in the house but will not stand for much dictation on the part of his former subordinate and constantly reminds him what a poor soldier he was. This creates a great many good comedy situations and the two men frequently steal the picture from the girls. Grandpa is particularly incensed at an aeroplane which constantly flies over the estate but has to accommodate himself to the situation when the flier wins one of his granddaughters.

For the family audience including young people.

(Warner Bros.—7 reels)

My Man

Directed by.....*Archie Mayo*
Featuring .....*Fannie Brice*
Original screen story by Mark Canfield

FANNIE, a poor tenement girl, left to mother a small brother and a younger sister works in a theatrical company making costumes. One day her big chance comes to try her skill on the musical stage. She has fallen in love and is about to be married to a young man whom she has befriended but her younger, thoughtless sister sets out to win Fannie's fiance. Sickened by her sister's betrayal and saddened by the loss of the only man she had ever cared for, Fannie strives to make good and in the end she realizes that success comes through unhappiness and sacrifice. Her triumph comes when she is acclaimed by everybody on her opening night of musical comedy. This picture marks the debut of Fannie Brice, the stage comedienne, into the sound films. The story is a sentimental one but furnishes a background for the star to sing her many song favorites.

For the family audience including young people.

(Warner—12 reels)

* The River

Directed by .....*Frank Borzage*
Featuring .....*Charles Farrell*, *Mary Duncan*
Novel by Tristram Tupper

A HUMAN love story with the river as a symbol of love, reflecting the feelings of the lovers. A man, almost still a boy, sets sail down the river in a self-made boat to see the world. He is held up in a narrow gorge and meets a woman of the world. He falls in love with her and she is fascinated by his artlessness. He tries to leave her to satisfy his impulse to see the world, not realizing that he has found his world in her. She recaptures her innocence through him and ceases to be a woman of the world. The picture has moments of real lyrical feeling. Its simplicity of theme and treatment is a relief from the unnecessary elaborateness of the average picture. The acting is both sustained and restrained.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

Scarlet Seas

Directed by.....*John Francis Dillon*
Featuring .....*Richard Barthelmess*
Story by W. Scott Darling

EXCITING sea adventure story. The captain of a small trawler kidnaps a cabaret girl who has refused him. His ship sinks on the high seas and he and the girl barely escape in a small boat. After a long hard pull they sight a ship on which there appears to be no sign of life. Climbing aboard they find the

mutinous crew feasting below while the captain is locked up in his cabin. The girl joins the mutineers. The hero releases the captain and tries to quell the mutiny. A long and thrilling battle then ensues in which the girl finally allies herself with the hero again as he fights almost singlehanded. The crew is at last subdued.

For the family audience including young people.

(First National—7 reels)

The Side-Show

Directed by ..... *Erle C. Kenton*
Featuring ..... *Marie Prevost*, *Ralph Graves*

Original screen story by J. Greene

A PICTURE of circus life well acted and directed. A rival circus owner bent on ruining his competitor bribes several performers and helpers to tamper with the apparatus, causing a number of accidents. These mysterious happenings finally come to an end when one of the prearranged accidents kills the chief conspirator. Another thrilling scene occurs when the heroine has apparently not been removed from a basket through which the fakir plunges a number of heavy cavalry swords.

For the family audience including young people.

(Columbia—7 reels)

*Spies

Directed by ..... *Fritz Lang*
Featuring ..... *Rudolph Klein*

Original screen story by Thea Von Haburg

A FAST and dizzy melodrama of a supercriminal. He is at the same time an international banker who is greatly interested in interfering with critical diplomatic situations and stealing treaties which concern his vast holdings in Russia. He is undone when one of his women spies falls in love with an English secret service man. The production scale of this picture is most sumptuous and the death of the villain takes place dramatically when he is cornered in his disguise as a circus clown. This German picture was the first film to be brought to America by air, having been a part of the cargo of the Graf Zeppelin.

For the family audience including young people. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

NON-FEATURES

The Air Derby

(Russ Farrell, Aviator, Series)

An exciting airplane story with a thrilling race.

For the family audience including children.

(Educational—2 reels)

Day Dreams

(Laemmle Novelty)

A child's dream of a trip to the bottom of the sea.

For the family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

Forget Me Not

Christmas story of toys that come to life and enact a love story.

For the family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

Killing the Killer

The encounter between a cobra and a mongoose with disastrous results to the cobra.

For the family audience including young people. (Ufa—1 reel)

Monument Valley

(World We Live in Series)

Marvelous scenic of Monument Valley in Arizona showing curious mountain formations due to erosion.

For the family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 43

Sudbury, England (Pathecolor); Useless Inventions; Climbers—Young Women of Colorado; Modernisms.

For the family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 2

A Drama with Players; Bottles; Cherry Blossoms, Old Nippon (Pathecolor).

For the family audience including children.

Pathe Review No. 3

Rabbit de Luxe, English Hares; Malay Pastoral; Chromatic Cinematics.

For the family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pets and Pests

Interesting variety of animal pets and some mischievous monkeys.

For the family audience including children.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Shifting Scenes

(Lyman H. Howe's Hodge Podge)

Fine assortment of world wide scenes.

For the family audience including children.

(Educational—1 reel)

Storied Palestine

(World We Live In Series)

Interesting scenes of Palestine with references to the life and activities of Christ.

For the family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

Strange Prayers

(Ufa Oddities)

Fascinating views of native life in Sumatra showing religious rites and so forth.

For the family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

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*The Toy Shop

A charming story of an old toy-maker who takes in a little waif. She falls asleep and dreams of toy dolls who come alive. Technicolor.

For the family audience including children.

(Tiffany-Stahl—1 reel)

Walking Fish

(Our World Today Series)

Walking fish; steel ingot works at Bradford, Pa.; Tony Sarg's marionettes.

For the family audience including children.

(Educational—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Ko-Ko on the Track

(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko goes in for horse racing and has hard luck.

For the family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Noisy Noises

(Our Gang Comedy)

A fat boy with a tooth ache has to mind the baby in a house full of musicians and noise makers. He hires the gang to help him.

For the family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Speeding Youth

(Collegian Series)

Forbidden to have automobiles at Calford the students get motor cycles and stage a race.

For the family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

What a Trip

A hilarious fishing trip.

For the family audience including children.

(Educational—1 reel)

The Winning Point

(Collegian Series)

Calford goes in for basketball.

For the family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

Yankee Clippers

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald the Lucky Rabbit establishes a barber shop.

For the family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

Selected Pictures
Fourteenth Annual Catalog

CONTAINING the best entertainment films selected by the Review Committees from pictures submitted to the National Board of Review during 1928.

The pictures included are features and short subjects. They are listed with their audience suitability, an aid in discriminate theatre attendance and in program building for special showings. If you wish the selected pictures of 1928 in convenient form they will be found in this catalog. Price 25c.

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The Better Films Committee, or Motion Picture Study Club, plan has been found by many committees to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. IV, No. 2 February, 1929

Censorship A Step Backward

The Motion Picture Learns to Talk

We Review Our Conference

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

20 cents a copy $2.00 a year

NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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We Review Our Conference

THE announcement of the 1929 Annual Conference and Luncheon of the National Board of Review which was sent to our friends and members contained the notice that this would be a special occasion as it marked the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the National Board by the People's Institute. The response to the invitation to celebrate this event with us was most gratifying. A large number of delegates made the trip to New York from far and near, hailing from many states, with a brave disregard of the threat of wintry ailments. It was a pleasant task for the Conference Committee, the resident members and the staff of the Board to welcome them. The industry too, represented both at the Conference and the Luncheon by many veterans of the motion picture who have known the Board from the early days, not only responded generously with speakers but helped with sundry entertainments for the delegates. If an institution, like an individual, is to be judged by the friends it makes and keeps, then the National Board of Review has every reason to be proud of this anniversary celebration. As usual the meetings were held within the hospitable portals of the Waldorf-Astoria. Many regrets were expressed that this historic hostelry, which has housed so many of our previous conferences, is about to pass out of existence.

Three ex-chairmen of the National Board, Dr. Frederick C. Howe, Reverend Cranston Brenton and Colonel Clarence A. Perry, during a stimulating morning session of the Conference, marred only by the regrettable absence on account of illness of the present chairman, Dr. William B. Tower, reviewed the history of this institution, tracing with vivid remembrance the Board's early struggles and problems, the gradual change from censorship to selection, the increasing understanding and co-operation of the producers as they came to see the friendly, constructive function of the Board and its solicitude for the welfare and better standing of motion pictures. The development of the better films movement, which was an outgrowth of the expanding services of the Board in answer to the need for a central clearing house of information on motion pictures, was sketched. This idea was crystallized in the Better Films National Council which, with Better Films Committees and affiliated groups throughout the country today, makes the Board a truly national institution. The soundness of the principles of the Board, the method of selection and emphasis upon the better films and the common sense method of adjustment of the ever varying tastes and standards of the community to the growing and developing art of motion picture entertainment, stated by these three speakers out of their first-hand knowledge, was again vindicated.

In the realm of the practical application of this knowledge and understanding of motion pictures valuable contributions were made by many speakers at the Conference sessions. National organizations such as the Child

Study Association of America, Daughters of the American Revolution, Federation of Music Clubs, International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, carrying on important better films work as a part of their activities, were represented on the program by their presidents or motion picture chairmen.

Both at the Conference and at the Luncheon the problem of combating censorship was frequently touched upon. A basic resolution condemning legal censorship was drawn up by the Resolutions Committee and passed by the Conference. This resolution amplifies the previously affirmed attitude of the Board:

"RESOLVED, That censorship of the motion picture, whenever and however proposed, whether benevolently or autocratically administered, is in fundamental contradiction of the spirit of the democratic principles which underlie our theory of government and society.

"It is no exaggeration to claim that if the framers of the Constitution had been aware of the potentialities of the motion picture, they would have recognized the wisdom of guaranteeing the freedom of the screen no less than the freedom of the press. For the motion picture, besides being the most characteristic entertainment medium of our age and times is, in the deepest sense, news—the most immediate and intimate news of the kind of people we are—a reflection of our hopes and our ideals.

"In a free society, it is axiomatic that the individual need accept no censorship except a self-censorship, the discipline which the wise man exercises over himself. The motion picture, too, as an expression of ourselves, is in the long run self-regulative, and no theory of paternalism, however sophisticated or disguised, is fit to come between a sovereign people and the medium through which it re-experiences life.

"In that sense, any resolution against censorship must be considered perpetually in being as a living protest against an atavism which no democratic society can tolerate.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That with the advent of the sound picture, the principle of freedom of expression for which the motion picture has contended, can be applied with even greater force in so far as censorship of dialogue represents a direct invasion of the right of free speech with which there can be no compromise."

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Conference reaffirms its past resolutions setting forth its opposition to censorship while stating herewith its opposition to the bill to create Federal censorship of motion pictures introduced into the House of Representatives by Congressman Hudson; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of this Conference be instructed to send copies of this resolution to the members of the United States Congress."

This resolution was read at the Luncheon table and broadcast over the entire country. It has been widely quoted in full by a large section of the press with favorable editorial comment.

The Annual Luncheon held in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria, which brought together hundreds of members and friends of the Board, was the culmination of the three days' Conference. The speakers' table at the Luncheon presented an array of celebrities of the screen and of nationally known orators. Among those who greeted and addressed the enthusiastic audience were Mayor James J. Walker, Anita Loos, Bert Lytell, Mae Murray, Phyllis Haver, Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, J. D. Williams, Sophie Kerr, Harry M. Warner and Congressman Loring M. Black. The program was broadcast over Columbia's large network of stations and enthusiastically received by the radio audience to judge from the great number of congratulatory letters which we have received.

Wires and radiograms were read from many sincere friends who could not be present, among them being Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, David Wark Griffith, Sergei M. Eisenstein and Commander Richard E. Byrd.

The outstanding event among the entertainments provided for the Conference delegates was an unforgetable evening at the Warner Vitaphone studio where, through the courtesy of Mr. Harry M. Warner, a sound picture of the delegates was produced. The members taking part in this were Professor Leroy E. Bowman, Secretary, National Com-

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Censorship a Step Backward

By Sophie Kerr

It was a distinct pleasure to have upon the program at the Fourteenth Annual Luncheon of the National Board the well known author Sophie Kerr. Her address showed an unusual knowledge and sympathy regarding the motion picture in one connected with another of the arts and we are happy to publish it herewith.—Editor's Note.

I AM here today as a writer with no axe to grind, no favor to ask and no lurking grudge to avenge. I have written eight books and on no one of them has the literary censor placed the shadow of his disapproval. Therefore, I feel that I may speak with special freedom on a subject which at this particular time should be important to every thoughtful citizen of these United States, for once more the shadow of censorship is waiting, waiting, biding its time to rise and blot out forever all freedom in artistic expression under the pretext of protecting the morals of the public by law, arguing that morality, good taste, honesty and beauty, can all be obtained by legal procedure. This is false. We cannot make laws which will arbitrarily cause people, young and old, rich and poor, to turn suddenly wholly moral or endow them with good taste or honesty or beauty. Indeed, I heartily wish we could, for then in a calm judicial way we would quickly and painlessly legislate our world into a delightful Utopian perfection.

No set of laws, however carefully framed and well-intentioned, can turn this confused chaotic planet we live on into paradise, and the legal censoring of books, of plays and of motion pictures, is a step backward in our proper freedom. It shows that the lawmakers do not believe in the ability of the masses of our citizens to think for themselves. But when you take from any people the right to form and express their own opinions, you exercise a tyranny which belongs to the Dark Ages of the Inquisition, the torture chamber and persecution for liberty's sake.

I hear a great deal now and then from various sources about what is wrong with motion pictures. It may be that there are a great many things wrong with motion pictures. In this opinion the actual workers in motion pictures would be the first to agree, but destructive criticism is always easy and always cheap. I want to say here that if there is one thing which is right with the movies and always has been right, it is their willingness to progress, their open-minded eagerness to do their best in their alloted field of art. No human being with an idea for the

Sophie Kerr

betterment of motion pictures in any possible direction but wins a respectful hearing and, if his idea has the least merit, a thorough investigation and trial by motion picture experts. It is because of this that in the comparatively short existence of the motion picture a gigantic, unheard of, undreamed of distance has been covered and the spirit of progress in motion pictures was never more alive than at this moment—better, more interesting, more vital, more and more a necessary part of life's diversions and education. I cannot see any limit to their possibilities.

They have entered science; they have entered commerce; they have come to stay in our thought, our vocabulary and our customs.

As I understand it, it was as a necessary part of this progress that the National Board of Review was formed, and it is as a necessary part of this progress that it functions now. Its purpose, as I see it, has always been selection, not condemnation, and it has functioned on the premise confirmed by its years of experience that the American public is quite capable of lifting up its voice and letting itself be heard about any picture it does not like, or more simple and powerful still, condemning such a picture by refusing to pay its good money to go and see it.

For twenty years the public has assuredly lived up to its part of this premise. What now? Has the public suddenly lost its sense, its judgment and its voice? You know it has not, and so do I, and so does everyone who will give the matter even a casual thought. My own feeling is that most of the loud shrieking cries for governmental censorship come from people who are looking for fat salaried appointments from the government if censorship is adopted, rather than from people who are genuinely concerned for the public weal; whatever the motive of its advocacy, whether perfectly though mistakenly sincere, or merely a mask for the job hunter, censorship is undemocratic, unprogressive, tyrannical and, moreover, wholly insulting to the thousands and thousands of motion picture audiences of this country. I hope with all my heart that these audiences will take every opportunity to resent this low and false estimate of their mental quality.

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munity Center Association, Faculty, Department of Social Science, Columbia University; Mrs. Newton D. Chapman, National Chairman, Better Films Committee, D.A.R.; Colonel Clarence A. Perry, Associate Director, Recreation Department, Russell Sage Foundation; Mrs. James A. Craig, President, Jacksonville (Fla.) Better Films Council; Mr. George Hampel, Secretary, Milwaukee (Wis.) Motion Picture Commission; Gina Branscombe, American composer; Captain George W. Cowan, Amusement Inspector, Providence (R. I.); Mrs. Frederick I. Mosher, State Chairman, Motion Picture Committee, Maryland Federation of Women's Clubs and Mrs. Walter Willard, Chairman, Motion Picture Committee, State Federation of Pennsylvania Women, while about two hundred formed the interested, applauding audience. A delightful tea hour was spent by the delegates as the guests of Roosevelt House where Mrs. Douglas Robinson, sister of the late Theodore Roosevelt, entertainingly related stories of her famous brother and a film *The River of Doubt,* one of the many of the large Roosevelt collection, was viewed.

The different Conference and Luncheon addresses will be printed in full or in part in forthcoming issues of the MAGAZINE so that our friends and readers who were unable to be present will have the messages of the occasion brought to them.

If our anniversary celebration has been a success, as we think it has, we realize it was made possible only through the loyalty and interest of our many friends. To them we extend our cordial appreciation with the hope that they may all be with us again in the coming year.

The trip to the Vitaphone Studio with the making and demonstration of a sound picture, so happily made possible by Mr. Harry M. Warner, was exceedingly entertaining and instructive. One Conference visitor declared it alone was worth the journey to New York City and many others have said, proving the value of visual aids, that now they actually know the mystery of a sound picture. Mr. Warner stated that evening, in his hospitable and interesting address, that those appearing in the picture might have copies of still photographs. In response to a number of requests a supply of these has been sent to the office of the National Board and these requests filled. Others may have copies by writing to the Board. Another of Mr. Warner's courtesies has been the presentation of a print of the sound film to the National Board for circulation. Those taking part in the picture who may wish to see and hear themselves can make arrangements to secure the film through the National Board.

The Motion Picture Learns to Talk

By Dr. Lee DeForest

Dr. DeForest stands in the forefront of the inventive geniuses of the world today. He was a pioneer in the development of wireless telegraphy in America. By 1919 *he had taken out over one hundred and twenty United States and foreign patents on radio, telegraphy and telephony. The name of Dr. DeForest has long been synonymous with radio and now he is becoming equally well known in another great field with the introduction of the talking film. He is the inventor of Phonofilm, the talking picture recording and reproducing device of General Talking Pictures Corporation.* —Editor's Note.

FOR one who has dedicated, as I have, many years of uninterrupted effort to give voice to the dumb, to add a mental third dimension to what has been entirely a monotonous flat surface, it is difficult to appreciate the outcries which are at least sufficiently vocal against "sound on film". Nature gave us ears as well as eyes. Beauty appeals to both of these organs. The fact that on the silent screen motion picture photography has developed an art whose beauty at times rises to transcendent heights is no logical reason why, coupled to this visual loveliness and appeal, may not be added all the beauty which skilled musicians and glorious trained voices have created. The appeal of such an ideal combination of perfections transcends anything that man has yet created. It remains today only an ideal, yet one worth striving for with all the inspiration, all the enthusiasm, all the devoted effort of which those skilled in the sciences of acoustics, electricity and mechanics are capable.

The aim sought is a noble one. The paths to realization of that aim are long, devious and unbelievably difficult. And yet, crude and imperfect as are our present "sound films," limited in their scope of action, there are nevertheless today flashes of realism, some bits of well nigh perfect voice reproduction, which gives courage to us who are engineering the mechanics of this new art, and which should awaken in the minds of even the most hostile critics the thought that the motion picture is at last finding its voice, and must in the not far future afford a new medium for the expression of true beauty, which is Truth.

It has been, as I remarked, a tedious and difficult path to our present technical achievement. The basic ideas involved in synchronized reproduction of sound and scenes from the screen are very old. But it was not until the electrical profession recognized the existence and the possibilities of the vacuum tube amplifier that any of the previously proposed plans could be practically realized in the theatre. I turned over to the engineers of the Western Electric Company 16 years ago the first cascade audion amplifier. The requirements of the long distance telephone, and especially the urgent demands for powerful amplification during the war, were chiefly responsible for the intensive development of the amplifier which followed. Following upon this stage came the wide-spread clamor for better radio reproduction, and a thousand engineers all over the world, but particularly in the United States, concentrated on every phase and detail of amplification, until today the essential link in the talking picture development may be regarded as well nigh perfect and finished.

It was coincident with this latter stage of development of the Audion amplifier that I labored on the problems of sound-photography on film. These problems were intricate and manifold. They embraced, in addition to those of amplification, microphones, electrical discharge through gasses, optics, the chemistry of photography, perfection of mechanical motion in camera and projection machine, the photo-electric cell, and improvement of our existing loudspeakers. In this discussion I will limit myself chiefly to Phonofilm (alias Movietone) where the sound is recorded on the film itself, as distinguished from the synchronized phonograph methods, typified in Vitaphone.

There are today three general methods of recording sound on film. The oldest is that of a beam of light reflected from a vibrating mirror, whose vibrations follow those of the sound waves to be recorded. This method is

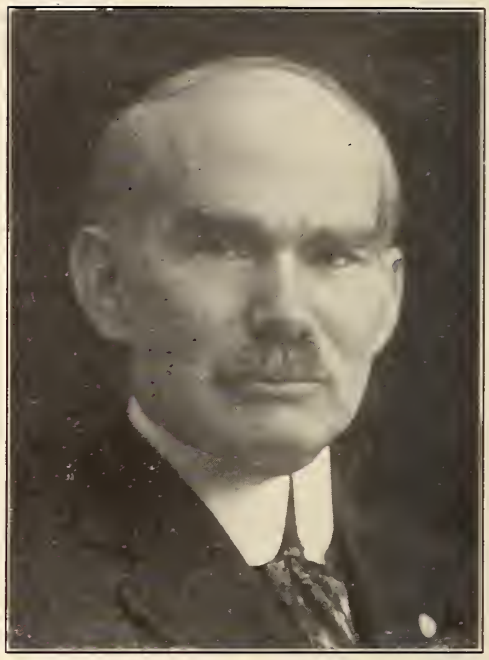
now employed in the RCA Photophone, a name coined forty years ago by Alexander Graham Bell to designate his beam-of-light telephone.

The Phonofilm methods employ a gas filled lamp, giving off a bright actinic light when an electric current is passed through the gas. The intensity of this light is proportional to the electric current passing at any instant. Therefore when the telephone currents from the recording amplifier pass through this lamp, its light fluctuates in brightness hundreds of thousands of times a second. This "gas-electric" light therefore is a visual translation of the telephonic currents which originated in the microphone. They are therefore the luminous translation of sound waves. This fluctuating light is photographed through a tiny slit upon a film travelling 90 feet a minute behind this slit. When developed and printed upon the same positive with the motion picture we have thereon the photographic records of both the sound and the pictured scene which it interprets.

I think that you will admit that the idea of thus photographing both scene and sound side by side upon the same film, to be later reproduced from the same screen, one on the screen surface for the eye and the other from a sound reproducer behind the screen for the ear, is both a practical and a beautiful one.

The third method of sound photography utilizes instead of a vibrating mirror or a gas-discharge tube, some type of a light valve, whereby the rays from a constant source of light are more or less cut off by the action of a shutter operated by the telephonic currents from the microphone. The Western Electric system employs this method.

Of the three methods, I have described, results thus far obtained by the Photion, or gas-discharge lamp, are at least equal and frequently superior, to those of the other two, while from the standpoint of simplicity, reliability and ease of practical manipulation in the sound studio and especially out-of-doors, the Photion-Phonofilm process is much to be preferred. In the reproduction from sound film records, no matter by what method recorded, one invariably employs essentially identical methods. A small lamp or fixed source of light, a slit, a system of lenses for focusing the image of this slit upon the sound



Dr. Lee DeForest

record on the film, and a photo-electric cell. As the sound record on the film is passed across this beam of light it acts to cut off more or less of the beam. Thus a fluctuating light is caused to fall on the photo-electric cell. The function of the cell is to translate these rapid fluctuations of light into corresponding fluctuations of electric currents. These currents thereupon become a duplication of the original telephonic currents from the microphone when the sound was recorded.

The next step in the process of reproduction is to amplify these exceedingly weak electric currents from the photo-electric cell some hundred million times, without appreciable distortion, until they are sufficiently powerful to actuate the loud speaker located behind the motion picture screen.

The sound record on the film must travel continuously, with absolute uniform velocity, across the beam of light. Elaborate mechanical refinements have been perfected to secure this steady motion. On the other hand the picture corresponding to this sound record must travel intermittently, step by step. This means, of course, that the picture and its corresponding sound waves must be located on the film, not side by side, but separated some

considerable distance from each other. But perfect synchronization is secured nevertheless by the very simple expedient of locating the small lamp and photo-electric cell a corresponding distance below the picture projection lamp and lenses.

Of all the intricate apparatus involved in recording and reproducing sound, whether from the film or the phonograph record, the least perfected elements today are the microphone for recording and the loud speakers for reproducing. In other words, the two translating devices required between air waves, or sound, and their corresponding telephonic currents. The distance range of the present day microphone for a true and faithful pick-up of sound, is far too small. This necessitates the use of a number of microphones skillfully arranged and camouflaged about the set, and great skill and alertness on the part of the monitor, or recording operator, who must switch from one microphone to another, or adroitly modulate the electric output from the various "mikes", as the action, or movement of the actors, in the scene progresses. The same holds especially true in recording music from a large orchestra. Successful recording here requires that the "mikes" should first be skillfully located among the various groups of instruments, and that their output be correctly controlled or "mixed", to secure the proper musical balance in the combined output from the sound recording amplifier. All this demands on the part of the recording operator a really musically trained and keenly discriminating ear, quick judgment, and a thorough familiarity with the music score. Lack of these essentials is sure to be revealed in the muddy, jumbled, unpleasing effects too frequently observed in our synchronized screen music today.

However perfectly recorded may be the sound record, however perfectly amplified in its reproduction, the shortcomings of our best loudspeakers today are chiefly responsible for our failure to attain that ultimate goal of all our ideals, 100 per cent realism in sound reproduction. We technicians know that this perfection will never be quite attained, but we will continue the struggle towards that end until only the keenest, most highly critically trained musician's ear can ever distinguish between the original sound and its reproduction. At present neither the orthophonic horn and diaphragm, nor the dynamic cone come anywhere near our ideal of sound reproducers. Each form is burdened with a host of defects inherent in its very nature.

A skillful combination of horn and cone has brought the Phono-film reproduction appreciably nearer to that ideal than is possible with either alone.

But the ultimate sound reproducer, the one which shall give us the nearest possible approach to perfection, will, in my opinion, involve nothing so clumsy, as inherently imperfect as a diaphragm of any description.

A way will be discovered for directly transforming telephonic currents into sound waves in the air without the intervention of anything mechanical, anything involving inertia or elasticity.

Dr. DeForest in his paper has dealt with two distinct phases of the sound film—the technical achievement, in which he has so largely figured, and the important uses and possibilities of the sound film medium. The first part we have been pleased to print above and the second part will be published in the next issue of the MAGAZINE.—EDITOR'S NOTE.

THE first sound picture especially designed for military instruction purposes has been completed and privately shown in Washington before a selected group of military officials. The film was made at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Ga., near Columbus, through the joint efforts of the Electrical Research Products, Inc., and the Fox Case Corporation, producers of Movietone features, with the cooperation of the War Department. The opening portions of the film were given over to excerpts showing the organization of medical and other units and to the use of sound pictures in describing the assembly and disassembly of weapons. The latter portion shows an infantry battalion on the defense, with a lecture describing the various troop movements given in conjunction with the film. Troops are shown in action under simulated war conditions, with machine gun fire, the laying down of a barrage, the operations of scout planes and all the other activities of the battalion both demonstrated and explained.

Exceptional Photoplays

COMMITTEE

Louise Hackney
Rita C. McGoldrick
Harriet Menken
Frances T. Patterson
J. K. Paulding
Walter W. Pettit
M. R. Werner

A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers who are looking beyond what the popular theatres have to offer.

SECRETARY

Alfred B. Kuttner

EDITORS

Alfred B. Kuttner
Wilton A. Barrett

The Man Who Cheated Life

Directed by.....Hendrick Galeen
Photographed by.....Will Haneuster

The Cast

Baldwin.....Conrad Veidt
Scapinelli.....Werner Krauss
Count Schwarzenberg.....Fritz Albert
Baron Waldis.....Ferdinand Von Alten
Countess Marguerite Schwarzenberg
Agnes Esterhazy
Lyduschka.....Eliza La Porta
Suggested by Edgar Allan Poe's story, "William Wilson"
Scenario by Hans Heinz Ewers

THE MAN WHO CHEATED LIFE is known abroad as *The Student of Prague*. The, to our mind, not altogether successful change of title is based on the assumption that the only Continental university of which American movie fans have ever heard is Heidelberg to which they immediately associate a handsome prince, lots of beer, and a drippingly sentimental love story. We are dealing with a different theme here. The student of this picture, who happened to study at Prague, did not really succeed in cheating life's responsibilities—as who of us has? But he met the Devil, who offered to do him a favor. And when a man meets the Devil there is always a story to tell.

The story as told by Mr. Hans Heinz Ewers is, however, of mixed origin. Based in part upon the folk version of the Faust legend, it also leans upon a certain not so well known story by Edgar Allan Poe called "Mr. William Wilson". Poe describes Wilson relentlessly followed by a living counterpart who haunts him like a shadow, warning and exposing him at every turn until at last Wilson kills him only to find that he has slain himself. Poe's tale is a model of artistic conciseness, avoiding any third agent to supply motive, and proceeding with true psychological inwardness to show that in the process of moral self-destruction we are ourselves the devils of our destiny.

Mr. Ewers, proceeding as a borrower rather than a creator, conventionally projects the devil in us into outward form by using a familiar figure of the vulgate form of the Faust legend, a rather oddly comic little man in outmoded attire and a touch of the mountebank about him. Thus Count "Scapinelli" appears to Baldwin, the student of our picture, and offers to help him out of his financial stringency with all the unction of a usurer. To be sure there is the little formality of signing a queerish contract involving Baldwin's soul, upon which Scapinelli lays much stress. Baldwin signs with deprecating hilarity but is taken aback sharply when Scapinelli removes his reflection from the mirror and makes off with it. Henceforth Baldwin walks without a shadow though he walks in golden luxury.

And now the picture gathers momentum and terror. Baldwin, wooing the rich Countess Marguerite, at first for her wealth and station but soon with a real, newly awakened love, is startled to find his embodied shadow appearing to him to block his path to her. The image becomes the emissary of the Devil and henceforth "Scapinelli" remains in the background. He is the "control", if we may borrow a term from the current spiritualistic magic of today, through which the Devil guides Baldwin to his destruction. Baldwin

ignores the warning of his counterpart in his courtship of Marguerite, realizing that in his pure love for her lies his only hope of salvation. Here the influence of Goethe's "Faust" again asserts itself. But meanwhile Marguerite's accepted suitor, Baron Waldis, has grown more and more jealous and a challenge to a duel follows when Baldwin's former light-o'-love puts a love letter of Baldwin's into his hand.

Baldwin is the best swordsman in Prague. Marguerite's father begs him to spare the Baron's life by refusing to go on with the duel. Baldwin gives his word of honor and we see him hastening to the duelling grounds to refuse to fight even at the risk of being called a coward. As he runs through a clearing in the woods his image walks by him, wiping his sword on the grass. He has impersonated Baldwin and slain the Baron.

Baldwin stands dishonored. He plunges into dissipation. At the gaming table the Devil's luck is still with him and while he wins his friends' money he loses them. In the treadmill of pleasure his feet grow weary. Once more he seeks out Marguerite, a last refuge. When she accuses him of having treacherously slain Baron Waldis he leads her to a mirror and reveals his secret. She recoils in horror.

Baldwin at bay turns to battle with his malevolent image. But against its insubstantiality neither stick nor stone can prevail. Baldwin seeks refuge in flight, as one who would run away from himself. The image meets him at every turn. There is no escape for Baldwin, and when he shoots the image the bullet pierces his own breast.

The Man Who Cheated Life has the advantage of expert casting and the authentic background of the historic city of Prague. Another notable asset is the fine photography for which Will Haneuster of *Caligari* fame is responsible. This is particularly true of the interiors in Marguerite's manor where the photography is soft and luminous, harmonizing beautifully with the old-fashioned charm of a clavicord recital and a formal minuet.

The ladies of the cast would be more than appealing in any American film and are doubly so in a German picture. The rather obvious beauty of Eliza La Porta who acts the part of Baldwin's former light-o'-love pro-

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The Case of Lena Smith

Directed by.....Josef von Sternberg
Photographed by.....Harold Rosson

The Cast

Lena Smith.....Esther Ralston
Franz Hofrat.....James Hall
Herr Hofrat.....Gustav von Seyffertitz
Frau Hofrat.....Emily Fitzroy
Stefan.....Fred Kohler

Original screen story by Samuel Ornitz

A STORY of mother love would, at first sight, seem strange material for Joseph von Sternberg's directorial genius. The director of *The Salvation Hunters, Underworld* and *The Last Command* has a record of achievement which would hardly qualify him to glorify motherhood in the exaggerated, hysterical manner which has been so much the mode on the screen ever since *Stella Dallas* caught us unaware.

So it was at least to be expected that von Sternberg would treat the motherhood theme with a difference, would divorce it from the obvious and perhaps even point it up with a touch of irony.

These expectations *The Case of Lena Smith* largely fulfills. The story of Lena's struggle for the possession of her son is told long after it happened, when Lena was already a middle aged woman. Her son, now grown to manhood, has been called to the Austrian colors at the outbreak of the war and the officials in charge of the enlistment, who know the case, fall to gossiping about it and the camera takes us swiftly back to twenty years ago when Lena came up from the farm to Vienna to enter domestic service.

While out larking with other servant girls at an amusement park Lena flirts with Franz, a light-hearted young Austrian officer, and their acquaintanceship ripens into a serious love affair. When Lena finds that she has accidentally taken service in the household of Franz's family she welcomes the opportunity to be near him though their relations have tapered off and their whole affair has remained clandestine. Franz's father is a pompous official who functions with unctuous complacency as an inspector of public morals.

Lena's one engrossing interest, now that Franz avoids her and spends all his time behind the barrier of his regimental cafe, is the child which has resulted from their union.

This necessitates secret visits at night and absences from the house which arouse suspicions. Franz's father is much concerned. As guardian of the public morals he cannot afford to have any irregularities among the members of his own household. He is really a prize snooper, a species not entirely unknown to the American scene, and it is not long before he enters Lena's room to look for evidence. He finds a photograph of Franz. At the same time the malicious janitor and his wife report that they have seen Lena airing a baby.

Lena's troubles come to a head. She is summarily discharged and her son is taken from her by the police, pending an investigation. She can regain temporary possession of him only by putting up a bond of a thousand crowns. Franz does not have the money but Stefan, who appeared at the beginning of the picture as Lena's rustic admirer, supplies part of the money and Franz is confident that he can use it to win the rest by gambling. He loses and shoots himself. His father, now confronting Lena with deadly enmity, denounces her at the inquest. Lena, somewhat providentially perhaps, then produces a marriage certificate and things have apparently been made right. But she finds that it is still possible to be wrong in a court which can arbitrarily put you into contempt for having been too outspoken about your maternal feelings. She gets six months in a reformatory, and her child is put away in an institution.

From the reformatory Lena escapes with a sublime disregard for the lacerations of a barbed wire fence, and succeeds in kidnapping her child out of the reformatory, taking refuge with the patient and understanding Stefan. Now in 1914, and here the ironic note emerges, her sacrifices have apparently been all in vain for she must send her man child into a war from which few were destined to return.

The plot, as thus outlined, is not altogether proof against criticism. The concealment of the marriage until almost the end, does seem a little tricky though it is effective in confounding our moral snooper. Also, parts of the court proceedings seem somewhat arbitrary. On the one hand it is news to us that a woman in Lena's position would have been deprived of the custody of her child simply because it was illegitimate, and on the other hand it would have been immediately restored to her after she waved her marriage certificate. Nor is the conviction on the contempt charge convincing, for mothers are prone to go out of bounds when their maternal instincts are thwarted in a way which even a court would understand.

Gustav von Seyffertitz, to dispose of that veteran first, gives a capital performance as a petty official whose bureaucratic soul revenges itself for its obsequiousness in office by tyrannizing over the home circle. He is less theatrically grotesque than he has sometimes been and is physically splendidly suited to his part, needing only a conical high hat and an umbrella under his arm to look the image of a universal prohibitionist.

But of course Esther Ralston is the high spot of the picture. Here once more we have the rare treat of an American film actress who is willing to follow the physical necessities of her part irrespective of her much advertised comeliness, to appear drab and dirty of face when the exigencies of the action would preclude a constant use of mirror, lipstick and powder puff, to sacrifice the appearance of youth and the allure of inappropriately beautiful clothes. The inner thing which the part calls upon Miss Ralston to portray, the quality which must characterize her interpretation and give it universal significance, stands out the more strongly for these apparent handicaps of personal appearance.

Von Sternberg directs with his usual insight and his feeling for the scene, giving, in particular, a believable picture of Vienna. But sometimes he hurdles over difficulties somewhat too airily missing thereby the dramatic strengthening of his story by showing obstacles convincingly overcome. It is dangerous practice to confront a character with an insurmountable will and then to show him suddenly on the other side of the wall. We refer particularly to Lena's all too easy kidnapping of her son. She walks into a children's home in which there are apparently no locks, no night watchmen and no nurses on duty. But again this is a minor flaw in an otherwise exceptional picture, possibly a privilege of mother love seeking its own.

(*Produced and distributed by Paramount*)

Motion Pictures for Parents' Exposition

THE United Parents' Associations of Greater New York Schools will hold an exposition in Grand Central Palace, New York City, from February 23rd to March 2nd, which will be a graphic presentation of the functions of the schools, the industries and public welfare organizations of the community. It is to be called the Parents' Exposition and is intended for parents since the training of children to take their places as citizens in a new and better world is dependent upon the measure in which parents visualize their duties.

There is a two-fold purpose in the carrying out of the exposition idea:

1. To bring before the parents and citizens of the city the best and most scientific information covering all phases of homemaking and child training.

2. To show the inter-relation of these agencies, social, industrial and philanthropic, and to correlate them in a unified program for the broadest and best development of our children.

And the desired results are also two-fold:

1. The education of the parent to use such aids as exist.

2. The education of the parent to work for improvement of existing civic conditions.

The co-operation of leaders in all fields of work has been sought, and their response has been such as to give an added impetus to the exposition as an educational device. The strength of this group of people who stand behind the exposition, has been mobilized into a series of committees to approve policies of the exposition, to determine what educational ideas should be conveyed through the exhibits and to advise on character of exhibits.

The motion picture is to have an important part in the exposition. To handle this phase of the work, a Film Committee was appointed several months ago and has been preparing representative and helpful programs. Mr. Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary of the National Board of Review is the chairman of the committee. Members are Arthur DeBra, Public Relations Department, Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.; Mrs. Howard S. Gans, president, Child Study Association of America; Mrs. Louis G. Myers, commissioner, Manhattan Council of Girl Scouts; Dr. J. F. Montague, Bellevue Hospital; Mrs. Frances Taylor Patterson, Instructor in Photoplay Composition, Columbia University; Miss Elizabeth Perkins, Executive Chairman, Film Bureau; Col. Roy W. Winton, Managing Director, Amateur Cinema League; George W. Zehrung, Director of Motion Picture Bureau, International Committee of Y. M. C. A.

The film programs are to demonstrate the community use of the motion picture outside of the regular theatre entertainment. Four hours each day is to be given to the showing of films in the auditorium of the Exposition, two and one half hours in the afternoon and one and one half hour in the evening. Some of the subjects covered by the film demonstrations will be Juniors' Matinees, the community work for children in providing suitable picture programs under proper chaperonage; lecture and high school use of films under community group auspices; amateur movies, the home use of motion pictures as recreation, instruction and creative expression; church use of films.

The process of selection and audience classification of films will be shown through a short film made by the National Board of Review picturing a Board Review Committee at work, giving procedure and method.

Other subjects covered will be different phases of the school and college use of the motion picture. Outstanding examples of scientific films will be exhibited in this connection. A film from the Harvard Film Foundation will show the educational film made in a university laboratory. Medical and public health films, industrial films and other subject films will help to demonstrate in a measure the many fields of activities in which the motion picture has taken an important part in making that subject vivid and alive and of greater interest and value to mankind.

Entertainment pictures will likewise have a place on the program. These feature films are intended to illustrate the variety of pictures to be found in regular theatres catering to public entertainment needs.

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

Cleveland (Ohio) is called, I believe, the sixth city. It may well be so designated in regard to its size but considering its hospitality and interest it should be called the "first city." It was my pleasure to witness a proof of the former through the very gracious entertainment accorded to me on my recent visit there. A proof of the latter was clearly demonstrated by the skilful way in which the showings of "The March of the Movies" were put over. A theatre generously donated, music freely and effectively given, and a large and enthusiastic audience to greet the picture marked the first presentation. And so great was the response to this showing that again the magic wand was waved and arrangements all perfected for a second presentation. Not satisfied with this a third showing was suggested but since the film was in demand elsewhere it could not be held at the time, but plans are under way for the future. I wish that it were possible that I too might again be routed to Cleveland so delightful in many ways was my stay there and I extend my appreciation and that of the National Board to those who so kindly took part in my entertainment. The following stories which were sent from Cleveland indicate the reception given "The March of the Movies" and the message from the National Board of Review.—The Editor.

THE Lakewood Woman's Club of Lakewood, Cleveland, Ohio, enjoyed a gala day on Monday, January 28. The program in charge of the Motion Picture Division of the Welfare Department, was held in the Lakewood Theatre. Mrs. B. F. McQuate, president of the Club, opened the meeting with a few brief remarks. Following her Mrs. Phil A. Schaflein, Chairman of this Division, introduced Mrs. Bettina Gunczy, Secretary of the Better Films National Council of the National Board of Review.

Mrs. Gunczy, in a most effective manner gave a report on the Twentith Anniversary Conference of the National Board of Review held recently in New York City and explained the work and purposes of the National Board.

The National Board's historical film, *The March of the Movies,* had been loaned for the occasion and through the gracious courtesy and co-operation of Mr. Larry Miller, manager of the Lakewood Theatre, the film, after a short introduction by Mrs. Gunczy, was shown. The music, which was excellent and formed a splendid accompaniment to the many variations of the film, was furnished by Mr. Miller's brother at the organ.

The Cleveland Cinema Club and the Motion Picture Division of the City Federation were the guests of the Club for this occasion.

The president, Mrs. McQuate. in behalf of the Club thanked Mrs. Gunczy for coming and giving her splendid talk and for bringing the picture, Mr. Larry Miller for his helpful co-operation and Mrs. Schaflein for her efforts in securing and arranging such a splendid program. It was said to be the finest program put on for the Club during the entire Club year.

THE Cleveland Cinema Club gave a luncheon at the Allerton House in Cleveland, Ohio, on Tuesday, January 29th, in honor of Mrs. Bettina Gunczy. Secretary of the Better Films National Council of the National Board of Review of New York.

Following the luncheon, a meeting and social hour was held in the parlor of the Allerton House, Mrs. Robert F. Moyer, president of the Cinema Club, gave a brief report of the Twentieth Anniversary Conference of the National Board of Review, which she had attended the previous week in New York City. Mrs. Gunczy lead an enlightening discussion on the different phases of the National Board's work and gave many helpful suggestions for carrying on the local work. Great enthusiasm was displayed on the part of those present, and the Club took on new courage and energy to function.

SO great was the interest in the first showing in Cleveland of *The March of the Movies,* the National Board's unique and instructive pictorial film history of the motion

picture that it was exhibited a second time. This showing was held under the auspices of the Cleveland Cinema Club on Saturday night, February 2nd, in the ballroom of the Allerton House, through the co-operation of the manager, Mr. Joyce and assistant manager, Miss Smith. Mr. Oliver of the Oliver Motion Picture Supply Co., assisted materially by furnishing free of charge a fine projection machine. The large audience was composed of instructors from Western Reserve University, members of the Board of Education, house guests of the Allerton, friends and members of the Cleveland Cinema Club. Mrs. Moyer, president of the Club, made a few introductory remarks regarding the film. The Junior League of the Federation acted as ushers. A very appreciative audience enjoyed the showing of this marvelous film.

THE Rev. J. E. Barbee was the principal speaker at the January meeting of the Jacksonville (Fla.) Better Films Council. He told of the recreational and educational advantages of motion pictures and the progress that has been made in the motion picture world.

THE Miami Better Films Council unanimously elected the following officers for the coming year: President, Mrs. David D. Koger; vice-president, Mrs. Guy V. Williams; recording secretary, Mrs. J. W. Corrington; corresponding secretary, Mrs. J. H. St. John; treasurer, Mrs. Johnson H. Pace. The president's address at the annual gathering stressed the importance of the better films work and expressed her appreciation for the co-operation of all the members. Comprehensive reports were given by the respective chairmen on the topics of "Juniors' Matinees," "Exceptional Photoplays," "Chaperones," "P.-T. A.," "Membership," "Finances," "Correspondence," and "Publicity."

THE Columbia (S. C.) Better Films Committee showed the following program at their late special children's performance *The High School Hero, Lazy Cat,* cartoon, *Scarlet Arrow,* serial, and one of the Collegian comedies.

AMONG the latest to show interest in the cause for better films were representatives of Parent-Teacher Associations from Teaneck, Bogota, Little Ferry and Ridgefield Park (N. J.), and the Woman's Club of the latter who met recently at the Ridgefield Park High School to form a Better Films Committee. The new committee's endeavor is "to bring before the public the best kind of pictures, that is the pictures selected by the National Board of Review, as the kind of pictures that are educational as well as entertaining." Quite a number of these new, interested workers attended the National Board of Review Conference.

MRS. E. M. Barsham, Motion Picture Chairman of the Delaware Federation of Women's Clubs in conference recently in Wilmington with the editor outlined a comprehensive plan of activity for her state work. Through her leadership motion picture chairmen have been appointed in twelve clubs throughout the state and these chairmen are enthusiastically preparing to carry forward the work. The communities represented are, in addition to Wilmington, Hockessin, Newark, New Castle, Richardson Park, Seaford and Faulkland, Delaware. Mrs. Barsham's ideas for the city and state are rapidly taking shape and we look for great results from the unified better films plan which is being initiated.

THE Waterbury (Conn.) Better Films Council, an affiliated Committee of the Better Films National Council, with Mrs. Frederick T. Hoadley presiding, had a spirited discussion of the Hudson bill at their last monthly meeting. Very favorable reports were given on the pictures *Simba* and *The End of St. Petersburg.*

THE motion picture department of the Three Arts League of Columbus (Ga.), one of the most recent organizations to become interested in the better films movement, held a most enthusiastic and interesting meeting during the past month. A splendid report of the picture, *Livingstone,* which was shown in that city at an invitational showing, was given and the sponsors were very much gratified with the patronage which it received.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
FRANCES C. BARRETT

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Family audience including young people acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the second classification.

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

Conquest

Directed by.....*Roy del Ruth*
Featuring.....*Monte Blue, Lois Wilson, H. B. Warner*

Novel by Mary E. Taylor

AN all-talking picture of two men who loved the same girl. These two start out on a South Pole expedition, one is wounded when their plane falls, the other, who has been the unsuccessful rival of the girl's hand, leaves him to die and returns home. Telling a story of bravery and privation, the man finally wins the girl, though it is through pity and not love. Later the other man is saved and returns. The husband discovers his wife's true feelings and so when the other man decides to attempt another South pole expedition, the husband throws in his lot and there again they are forced to land and the husband is wounded. This time the man whom the wife loves saves his companion. But the husband realizing what a cad he has been makes possible through sacrifice a happy reunion. The actors play well the parts which the story allots them.

For the family audience including young people. (Warner—8 reels)

* The Divine Lady

Directed by.....*Frank Lloyd*
Featuring.....*Corrinne Griffith, Victor Varconi*

Novel by E. Barrington

A ROMANTIC drama dealing with the life of the famous Lady Hamilton, the cook's daughter who became the wife of an English nobleman. It relates the now historical romance of Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton, who through her beauty and power made possible Lord Nelson's great naval victory. There are some excellent battle scenes of the two fleets engaging in conflict showing exact reproductions of Nelson's flagship and the other vessels. The novel from which the film was adapted has been closely followed. Especial credit should be given for the fine restraint and the dignified portrayal of the character of Lord Nelson and for the careful direction which has created a feeling of historical accuracy throughout the picture.

For the family audience including young people. (First National—12 reels)

The Doctor's Secret

Directed by.....*William de Mille*
Featuring.....*Ruth Chatterton*
Play "Half an Hour" by Sir James M. Barrie

AN interesting and powerful all-talking drama of a woman who loved a man and

a doctor who kept a secret. On the eve of leaving her husband for whom she has no love to go to Egypt with the man she loves, a woman is left desolate when her lover is killed by a passing machine as he is calling the taxi to take them away. The visiting doctor thinks at first that she is the wife but when she explains her relation to the man, the doctor denounces her. The woman returns to her home in time to keep her husband ignorant of the fact that she had planned to leave him, but she faces exposure when the same doctor who ministered to her lover is introduced as a dinner guest in her husband's home. Will he tell? About to reveal the truth, the doctor learns the real worth of the woman and the craven soul of the man, so he remains silent.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—6 reels)

* The Flying Fleet

Directed by.....*George Hill*
Featuring .....*Ramon Novarro*
Original screen story by Lieut. Commander Frank Wead and Byron Morgan

THE *Flying Fleet* breaks the altitude record for aviation pictures, for not even *Wings* soared so high. A good love story mingled with an engagingly sentimental devotion on the part of a group of young Annapolis graduates plus some expert flying sequences supplied by the aviation department of the United States Navy, are fused into a perfect entertainment picture. Of the six midshipmen who start out to qualify as aviators only two survive the gruelling tests and presently they find themselves candidates for the honor of undertaking a transpacific flight to Honolulu. To this rivalry is added the rivalry of love when both fall in love with the same girl. Tommy, played by Ramon Novarro, is chosen by the crusty old admiral but loses his privilege to Steve on account of an insubordination provoked by his jealousy of Steve who is trying to get the girl away from him. Steve, who is more cocksure than any conceited cock who ever hailed the rising sun, is brought down by a storm in the middle of the ocean and Tommy responds to the S. O. S., succeeding at last in a thrilling rescue when he parachutes from his burning plane, with the flames and smoke of the plane acting as a signal for the convoy fleet to find the wreck. Tommy gets the girl but Steve shares the glory with him.

Technically the picture is outstanding. The aviation sequences are among the best ever made, showing how aviators are tested and trained, with a "mother ship" for receiving and conditioning aeroplanes at sea in full action, and some astonishing aerial manoeuvres. Ramon Novarro and Ralph Graves act with charming youthful fervor and Anita Page supplies whatever *It* is.

For the family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

Hardboiled

Directed by.....*Ralph Ince*
Featuring .....*Sally O'Neil*
Story by Arthur Somers Roche

A ROMANCE of a chorus girl who marries a wealthy young man for his money. Realizing her love for him and wishing to change his ways she determines to rapidly spend the money he has in his own right since no more will be forthcoming from his father. When the money is all gone the husband goes to work. His father now tries to buy off the wife as he thinks she is nothing but a gold digger, but he soon realizes his mistake and is proud to acknowledge her.

For the family audience including young people. (FBO—7 reels)

In Dalarna and Jerusalem

Directed by.....*Gustav Nolander*
Featuring.....*Lars Hanson*, *Conrad Veidt*
Novel by Selma Lagerlof

THE underlying motif of this picture is the effect of intense religious feeling upon a simple folk. This is a long film and the story it tells is a rather intricate one relating how a religious zealot came to a Swedish village and persuaded a number of villagers to go to Jerusalem to found a colony. The vital effect this has on the lives of three people in particular is treated at great length and in minute detail. The theme is psychological as well as religious and would require much space for an adequate review. The picture is an excellent study of Swedish folk life and

the Jerusalem episodes were actually photographed in the Holy Land. There is noteworthy acting by a large cast and while the picture is unusually long the interest is well sustained throughout.

For the family audience including young people.

(Ernest Mattsson—14 reels)

In Old Arizona

Directed by.....{*Raoul Walsh* / *Irving Cummings*}

Featuring.....{*Warner Baxter* / *Dorothy Burgess* / *Edmund Lowe*}

"The Cabellero's Way" by O. Henry

THE story of a picturesque outlaw known as "The Cisco Kid." When he learns that his beloved Tonia Maria is unfaithful to him he cleverly plans so that her lover, a cavalry sergeant sent to capture the bandit. shall be the cause of her death by shooting her when he believes he is killing "The Cisco Kid." A new phase of the talking picture is used here. Many of the scenes were taken out-of-doors and as a result of this added flexibility in sound recording. the pace of the story is considerably faster than any of the talkies to date. The film is entirely in dialogue and the old West loses none of its thrill in becoming audible on the screen.

For the family audience including young people.

(Fox—9 reels)

The Life of Beethoven

Directed by.....*Hans Otto*

Featuring.....*Fritz Kortner*

Original screen story by Hans Richter

A WELL told life story of the great German musician showing his struggles and triumphs and the tragedy of deafness in his closing years. The events of Beethoven's life are told with a true understanding of a self-engrossed musical genius' difficulties in getting along in the world, of the bitterness of tardy recognition and of the hurt to the pride of a sensitive musician who has to eke out his existence by giving lessons to dull pupils. We see Beethoven in his glory, of course, when he is hailed as a master, but later we see him perforce relieved of the conductor's baton amid jeers on account of his deafness. There is a warmth and tenderness in this picture which should commend it to all admirers of Beethoven.

For the family audience including young people. (UFA—7 reels)

The Million Dollar Collar

Directed by.....*Ross Sederman*

Featuring.....*Rin-Tin-Tin*

Original screen story by Robert Lord

THE story of a dog who refuses to be a crook. Made to go around with a thief who pretends blindness, a police dog is forced to enter a jewelry store where his master steals a valuable necklace. The necklace is secreted in the collar of the dog and he is sent to the country. He makes his escape and adopts a young man as master. Later the necklace is discovered and the crooks caught, but the dog and his new master are happy in their love for each other and in their mutual love for a young girl.

For the family audience including children.

(Warner—6 reels)

Object—Alimony

Directed by.....*Scott P. Dunlap*

Featuring.....*Lois Wilson*

Story by Elmer Harris

A DOMESTIC drama of misunderstanding, with Lois Wilson in a lightly emotional rôle. When the son of a wealthy store owner marries one of the girls employed in the store, his mother thinks she is doing him a kindness by breaking up the match. But it brings heart-aches and grief to everyone concerned and she is only too glad to welcome her daughter-in-law into the family when unusual circumstances later bring them together.

For the family audience including young people. (Columbia—7 reels)

The Office Scandal

Directed by.....*Paul Stein*

Featuring.....*Phyllis Haver*

Original screen story by Paul Gangelen and Jack Gungmeyer

A PROMINENT race horse owner is found murdered in his office. Jerry Cul-

len, played by Phyllis Haver, a hardboiled "sob sister" on the staff of a metropolitan daily has befriended a down and out reporter and has had him placed on the paper. When he is disclosed as a former close friend of the dead man's widow scandal comes to roost in the newspaper office but the indefatigable and irrepressible Jerry solves the mystery, clears her reporter of suspicion and finds love. It is a thoroughly amusing, if not too accurate story, of newspaper life and should prove very entertaining to almost any audience.

For the family audience including young people. (Pathe—7 reels)

One Man Dog

Directed by ..... *Leon D'Usseau*
Featuring ..... *Ranger*
Original screen story by Frank Clark

A ROMANCE of the Northwest. Accused of the murder of a fur dealer, a young man and his dog make their escape and go out to find the real murderer. They get their man and the dog's owner wins the daughter of the murdered man.

For the family audience including children. (FBO—6 reels)

Orphan of the Sage

Directed by ..... *Louis King*
Featuring ..... *Buzz Barton*
Story by Oliver Drake

DRAMA of California in the early fifties. An old frontier scout and a young lad join a wagon-train of settlers on the way to Oregon from the gold fields. A renegade betrays the little band to the Indians but the boy succeeds in slipping through and bringing help from a nearby fort to the endangered settlers. This picture proves that there are still a lot of thrills in an Indian fight and Buzz Barton continues to remain about the most boyish boy in the movies.

For the family audience including children. (FBO—6 reels)

Outlawed

Directed by ..... *Eugene Ford*
Featuring ..... *Tom Mix*
Original screen story by George Pyper

TOM MIX, the hero of the American boy, again proves that right will always prevail and the villian will be properly punished. The hero, while searching for calm and restful surroundings, becomes involved with a gang of thieves and is accused of killing the local banker. After some exciting moments he is able to prove his innocence and captures the real killer and, of course, wins the girl in the bargain.

For the family audience including children. (FBO—7 reels)

Redskin

Directed by ..... *Victor Schertzinger*
Featuring ..... *Richard Dix*
Original screen story by Elizabeth Tickett

AN excellent technicolor picture of Indian life. An Indian youth who is made to go to the white man's school, and who later receives a university scholarship, finds himself neither white nor Indian but a redskin. His childhood sweetheart, a girl of the Pueblo Indians, is forced to marry a man of her own tribe whom she hates. She makes her escape and is later reunited with her lover after he has discovered a wealthy oil region. Only when the redskin is able to pay his tribe a large sum of money is he again received by them and also he must pay the Pueblo Indians money before he is accepted by them as the husband of one of their tribe. The scenery is very beautiful and the coloring superb.

For the family audience including children. (Paramount—9 reels)

A Shanghai Document

Photographed by ..... *Z. L. Stepanov*

A SUPER newsreel which presents a fascinating cross-section of the busy port of Shanghai with its exploiting colony of Europeans who fatten on the toil of the patient Chinese. The picture succeeds in making the multifarious industries of Shanghai which show a high degree of modern development alternating with surviving native handicrafts, a thing of real fascination without the aid of any conventional plot. This industrial survey is contrasted with the luxurious life of the European colonists.

For the family audience including young people.

(Amkino—5 reels)

The Shopworn Angel

Directed by.....*Richard Wallace*
Featuring.....{*Nancy Carroll*, *Gary Cooper*}

Story by Dana Burnet

A DRAMA of a chorus girl who gives up her easy mode of living when she falls in love with a soldier about to leave for France. On the eve of his departure they are to be married but the girl cannot tell the boy, who idolizes her, what she has been, neither can she marry him without telling him, so before the words are prounounced which makes them man and wife, she faints and the boy is forced to leave for France unmarried. The girl goes back to the chorus, but not to her easy life, so that one can only conclude that when the war is over, the girl has redeemed herself and can marry the boy with a clear conscience.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Sunset Pass

Directed by.....*Otto Brower*
Featuring.....*Jack Holt*

Novel by Zane Grey

A STORY of cattle rustling with Jack Holt in another Zane Grey western. In order to learn who is at the head of a gang of cattle rustlers, a man goes to prison for six months. There he finds out all he wishes to know. Unhappily he discovers that the brother of the girl he loves is the real head. In the fight which follows the capture of the rustlers the girl's brother is killed and so she is saved from knowing the truth. There is a background of beautiful scenery.

For the family audience including children.

(Paramount—6 reels)

Three Comrades and One Invention

Directed by.....*Alexis Popoff*
Featuring.....*Olga Treiakova*

Original scren story by Alexis Popoff

A LAUGHTERFUL comedy of Russian low life. Two mechanics have worked laboriously to perfect a machine for turning out a finished packing box as a substitute for those made by hand. The machine is an uncouth affair which will work only with proper coaxing. They proceed to demonstrate it before a pompous workingman's committee which, under the newly established economic regime, must pass upon all such things. A villainous carpenter who has hitherto supplied hand-made boxes upsets their scheme by tampering with the machine. Nothing daunted the two clownish mechanics begin a long Odyssey to the capital of the province to make their appeal to a higher industrial commission, with the villainous carpenter still pursuing them. A most personable country girl throws in her lot with them and after many adventures by land and river they arrive at their destination and give a triumphant demonstration. It is hard to convey the many excellencies of this low comedy of Russian life, the charm of the trip down the river and the various sly digs at the amiable corruption of Russian petty officialdom. The acting is capitally suited to the mood of the picture.

For the family audience including young people.

(Amkino—6 reels)

Weary River

Directed by.....*Frank Lloyd*
Featuring.....{*Richard Barthelmess*, *Betty Compson*}

Short story by Courtney R. Cooper

THE story of a singing convict which marks Richard Barthelmess' introduction into sound pictures. A gangster who has long evaded arrest is finally brought to trial and sent to prison. He is very rebellious at first but through the influence of the warden he becomes interested in music, organizes an orchestra and finally writes a song called "Weary River" which makes him famous when it is broadcast over the radio. On his release he finds it hard to live down his record and is only saved from going back to the old life by the girl he loves and the intervention of the warden. The acting and directing is good and the atmosphere in the prison sequences is well created.

For the family audience including young people.

(First National—9 reels)

Wild Orchids

Directed by ..... *Sidney Franklin*
Featuring ..... *Greta Garbo*, *Lars Hanson*

Original screen story by John Colton

LOVE tempted and tested in the tropics where passions run riot no less than nature is the theme of this latest Greta Garbo vehicle. Lili Sterling on a visit to Java meets a fascinating native prince who takes advantage of her husband's apparent lethargy to indulge in some tempestuous wooing. When the husband realizes the situation he takes advantage of a tiger hunt to try to kill his rival instead of making his wife feel that their love is the stronger bond. She after all has only yielded temporarily to the lure of her exotic wooer because her husband has allowed his love for her to become dulled. Husband and wife brought more close to each other by this test of their affections return to civilization leaving the prince to his own devices. Greta Garbo again conveys smouldering passion convincingly.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

NON-FEATURES

Bella Napoli

Views in and around Naples.

For the family audience including children.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Ends of the Earth

(World We Live In Series)

Interesting views of Terra del Fuego and the Straits of Magellan, also Cape of Good Hope, Australia and New Zealand.

For the family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

Fishes in Love

Remarkable views of fish life.

For the family audience including children.

(Ufa—1 reel)

The Harvest

Beautiful nature picture showing the gathering of the harvest.

For the family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

The Wolf of Wall Street

Directed by ..... *Rowland V. Lee*
Featuring ..... *George Bancroft*

Original screen story by Doris Anderson

A HECTIC story of Wall Street with a Napoleonic stock manipulator who outwits all his rivals only to be laid low by his faithless wife. Frantic moments on the stock exchange with men tearing up reams of ticker tape and rushing about madly, alternate with an intrigue between the "Wolf's" wife and his treacherous partner. When he discovers what is going on he ruins himself in order to pull his partner down with him and turns his wife out of the house. The picture stands out through George Bancroft's realistic acting as the "Wolf" with good support by Olga Baclanova who as usual is way out front among present day screen sirens.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Just for Fun

Father's gun was not supposed to be loaded —but it was, and thereby hangs a tale. A lesson to children against playing "war" games.

For the family audience including children.

(The Children's Theatre—1 reel)

(Hecksher Foundation)

Lover's Paradise

Colored scenic of Hawaii.

For the family audience including children.

(Tiffany-Stahl—1 reel)

Napoleon's Homeland

(Ufa Oddities)

Scenic of Corsica with special references to Napoleon.

For the family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

North of the Battery

(World We Live In Series)

Exceptional fine views of New York City.

For the family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 5

Hyacinth pictured by Dr. Arthur C. Pillsbury; Monarchs of the Plains—Bisons; Symphony of Military Motion—U. S. Marines; Excitement in Silk.

For the family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 6

Chicago; Castle from a Fairy Tale; Cobbler de Luxe.

For the family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 7

Extra! First Smell Picture—Perfume; Slowpoke—Florida Turtle; Rolling Down to Riga.

For the family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Question Marks

(Lyman H. Howe's Hodge Podge)

Scenic of various countries.

For the family audience including children.

(Education—1 reel)

Roumania

Views of Roumanian customs and industries.

For the family audience including children.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Rustic Romance

A little barnyard love tale of chicks.

For the family audience including children.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Treacherous Waters

Fishing in the Amazon Lakes.

For the family audience including children.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Uphill and Down

(Ufa Oddities)

Entrancing views of the Swiss Alps.

For the family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Wandering Hills

Life among the sand hills on the Courland Peninsula in the Baltic Sea.

For the family audience including children.

(Ufa—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Buster's Spooks

Buster and Tige get into a spooky house.

For the family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

The Eligible Mr. Bangs

A Phono-film talking playlet. Mr. Bangs imagines that every single girl wants to marry him but in spite of his caution he is finally trapped into a proposal.

For the family audience including young people. (Educational—2 reels)

The Fixer

Big Boy in some delightful pranks trying to make his sick mother laugh.

For the family audience including children.

(Educational—2 reels)

Getting Buster's Goat

Buster and Tige adopt a goat and trouble follows.

For the family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

Ginger Snaps

Big Boy has many bumps and adventures before he sells his stock of cookies.

For the family audience including children.

(Educational—2 reels)

Hen Fruit

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald the Lucky Rabbit has an egg factory.

For the family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

His Bride's Relations

An all talking comedy of the mishaps of a bride and groom.

For the family audience including young people. (Educational—2 reels)

Hold 'Em Ozzie
(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald the Lucky Rabbit tries his hand at football.

For the family audience including children.
(Universal—1 reel)

Ko-Ko Beats Time
(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko wants more speed and gets it.

For the family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

The Magician

Buster Brown and Tige wreck a magician's act by exposing his tricks.

For the family audience including children.
(Universal—2 reels)

Melancholy Dame

Comedy with negro actors. The wife of a cafe owner is jealous of a professional dancer who was her predecessor.

For the mature audience.
(Paramount—2 reels)

Mickey's Explorers

Mickey and his gang hunt for buried treasure.

For the family audience including children.
(FBO—2 reels)

Noise Annoys Ko-Ko
(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko is sent to the country but is glad to return to the city.

For the family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Reduced Weights
(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat tries to reduce an elephant's weight with dire results.

For the family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Sidewalks of New York
(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat becomes musical.

For the family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Suicide Sheik
(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald the Lucky Rabbit tries to commit suicide.

For the family audience including children.
(Universal—1 reel)

Summer Saps

A vacation at the beach and its difficulties.

For the family audience including children.
(Educational—2 reels)

(*Continued from page* 11)

vides a subtle contrast to the more aristocratic lineaments of Agnes Esterhazy in the part of the Countess. Both women give effective, balanced portrayals accurately proportioned to their relative importance in the story. It is interesting to note that they never appear together in the same scene and merely register their respective effects upon Baldwin.

Werner Krauss plays the minor but extremely important part of the Devil. Oddly accoutered almost to the point of appearing comical in his approximation of mountebank he flashes occasional shafts of malignancy which clearly reveal his kinship with the prince of darkness. This remarkable actor in whatever picture he appears always manages to fit as organically into a story as a tree into a forest.

Conrad Veidt in the stellar part of Baldwin, the student, faces and overcomes the handicap of playing a dual role in frequent double exposures at a time when this is not so novel as it was eight years ago. To our mind it is his best performance in any picture of his shown in America. Certainly the final sequence of his vain flight from his ever pursuing image and the life and death climax before the shattered mirror is one of the finest achievements of screen pantomime and camera magic. Mr. Veidt lends a new note to his interpretation by conceiving the image as suffering in helpless sympathy with Baldwin's tragic plight. This greatly heightens the human appeal of the story. New to and indicative of Mr. Veidt's hitherto inadequately revealed mimetic range is his convincing portrayal of a lover in his scenes with Marguerite.

(*Produced in Germany. Distributed by Affiliated European Productions, Inc.*)

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. IV, No. 3 March, 1929

Mt. Hood, Oregon
from
Robert C. Bruce's "The Maker of Mountains"
(see page 7)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Saying It With Telegrams

WE take this occasion to print a selection from the many congratulatory telegrams received on the observance of our Twentieth Anniversary. Coming from the South Pole, or very near it, from Mr. Edison, on his annual sojourn in Florida, from S. M. Eisentein in Russia, and from many motion picture notables in Hollywood, they make us realize that the National Board of Review *has achieved a geographical distribution comparable to that of the motion picture itself. We are glad to send them forth again to our many friends and supporters who, in reading them may feel with added force that they are sharing in a work which has the recognition of many significant public figures.—The Editor.*

Hollywood, Cal.

"I so wish I could be present at the Twentieth Anniversary Luncheon of the National Board of Review. I appreciate so much your asking me but I am in the midst of production and it would be impossible for me to leave Hollywood. I send you congratulations on your past attainments and best wishes for the continued success of your good works."

Mary Pickford.

Hollywood, Cal.

"Owing to pressure of work in my current production regret impossible to be with you on date set for your Luncheon. Please accept my appreciation of your efforts and hearty good wishes."

Charles Chaplin.

Fort Myers, Fla.

"Much to my regret I shall be obliged to forego the pleasure of attending your Twentieth Anniversary Luncheon but I am with you in spirit and send you most cordial greetings and the best of good wishes. Let me congratulate you on the substantial growth and sound position of your organization in the motion picture field."

Thomas A. Edison.

Hollywood, Cal.

"Congratulations on your Twentieth Anniversary. Am sorry production activity prevents my being with you today. Sincere good wishes for continued success."

Douglas Fairbanks.

Jan. 25, 1929.
Bay of Whales, Antarctica.

"As a member of the National Board of Review wish to extend heartiest congratulations on your Twentieth Anniversary and report 'Present' by Radio. We are deeply grateful for the co-operation that the National Board has shown the Expedition and are anticipating the arrival of our supply ship the *Eleanor Bolling* which is bringing to the Antarctic the motion picture machine and film library that is going to do so much to help us over the rough spots of the long winter night. Paramount's cameramen tell me they are going to bring back a good picture showing our experiences here on the ice for you fellows to look over. Best wishes for a happy gathering."

Richard E. Byrd.

Universal City, Cal.

"Am sorry my presence here prevents me from being with you at your annual Luncheon. Kindly accept my sincere compliments and best wishes for a continuance of the good work you are doing."

CARL LAEMMLE.

Palm Beach, Fla.

"In a period of development of the motion picture when the thought of nearly everyone directly connected with it is absorbed and intrigued by the introduction of new and revolutionary mechanical devices particularly the new talking pictures it is significant that the attention of the industry shall not be withdrawn even for a moment from the public obligation of the motion picture. The NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW with a past record of unselfish service to both the picture industry and the public it aims to serve is constantly fulfilling a place of constructive relationship which cannot be overestimated. Mere perfunctory congratulations to the men and women who are the inspiration of the NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW are distinctly inadequate to the present occasion, an entire industry with all the wide flung ramifications that implies acknowledges today its gratitude and thanks. In all American business and relationship between industries and the public they serve there is no finer bond of understanding than the clasp of sympathetic help between the NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW and the film industry. I regret I am not present with you today and can only send cordial and sincere greetings and pledge of future co-operation in your work."

JOSEPH P. KENNEDY.

Trenton, N. J.

"Regret exceedingly that engagement in Atlantic City will prevent my attending Luncheon of NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW on Saturday. Kindly convey my greetings and good wishes to National Board and guests.

MORGAN F. LARSON,
Governor of New Jersey."

Hollywood, Cal.

"I am in complete sympathy with the good work that your Board is doing and extend to all of you my sincerest good wishes for a most successful celebration."

SAMUEL GOLDWYN.

Moscow, Russia.

"Tremendously sorry not being able to arrive in time for your kindest invitation. Please express my heartiest greetings, congratulations and best wishes on Twentieth Anniversary NATIONAL BOARD REVIEW the greatest pioneer and leader of public thought in film culture and artistry. Sincere working contact between technical culture and tradition of great American cinema art and our Soviet cinema will open brilliantest perspective for world's film art. Heartily yours."

S. M. EISENSTEIN.

New York, N. Y.

"Opening of our St. Louis building demands my presence in that city on date when festive gathering takes place. Regret inability to be with you yet hope for the continued success of both your good self and associates.

Sincerely,
WILLIAM FOX."

Jacksonville, Fla.

"Please accept my heartiest congratulations upon the Board's outstanding accomplishments during these twenty years. Having been engaged in moving picture business for more than twenty years it is my opinion that NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW has done more to create a demand for good pictures than any other agency with the result that the industry has become a stable business and moving picture theatres have become institutions rather than simply commercial enterprises throughout the nation. Wishing you and NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW abundant success in all your future endeavors and with very good wishes to all assembled on this the Board's Twentieth Anniversary, I beg to remain

Cordially yours,
JOHN T. ALSOP, JR.,
Mayor of Jacksonville."

An Antidote for Censorship

By the Hon. James J. Walker
Mayor of New York City

It was indeed a great pleasure to the National Board to have Mayor Walker take part in its Twentieth Anniversary Luncheon held in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria. We wish all of our readers might have heard him. We are happy to be able to publish here some of the outstanding thoughts of his address.—The Editor.

I HAVE come to felicitate and congratulate the National Board of Review upon its Twentieth Anniversary. This is not the first occasion when I have been permitted to foregather with the National Board and listen to the very intelligent and very inspiring things that one always hears at these luncheons. I observe considerable growth, evidencing no little success, from the fact that the first luncheon of the Board of Review that I was permitted to attend was taken care of in a very small room in some isolated part of this very distinguished landmark in the city of New York, the old Waldorf-Astoria.

I don't like censorship, either. (*Mayor Walker was referring to other speakers and their opposition to it.*) I had an opportunity to officially register that protest when I voted against the enactment of the censorship law for the State of New York. I don't like it —it is not only undemocratic, it is un-American.

Frankly, I don't believe that you can add any additional force to the Ten Commandments by legal enactment of present-day laws. Yet here are some who think you can. Very recently we have had some difficulty with the theatre in the city of New York and notwithstanding the obvious difficulties and some undesirable productions that were made in this city, and notwithstanding the annoyance it brought to official life and the responsible authorities in this city, I could not be convinced that censorship was a cure. For this reason, with as much experience as anyone that I know outside of actual participation in the picture industry or the theatre activities, I wouldn't feel competent to be a censor of the theatre or pictures for this community. There are some things so obviously wrong that we might very easily get an unanimous verdict on them, but what I am so terribly fearful of is the dead line or the line of demarcation. I know that that is a wrong which everybody recognizes to be wrong, but as we progress and leave that which is so obvious and meet with the situation of a play or a picture, if you will, less repulsive, less objectionable, we come to another that is still less objectionable and inevitably get to the controversial point upon which there can be no unanimity of opinion. What will we do then? Confiscation of necessity must result from a difference of opinion.

We have censorship of motion pictures in six states. Are we to conclude from this that damnation is running rampant in the other forty-two states where there is no censorship? And even with censorship I can't find that humanity, that society, has materially changed in this country of ours. Yet I am willing to believe that there should be something, some responsibility and some authority such as the National Board exercises to eradicate that which is repulsive to this or any other community at large.

This movement that I hear about today of a national censorship, (*this was an allusion to the Hudson bill to create a Federal censorship*), with which logically one can't take exception if one recognizes any advantage in censorship at all, suggests that the only thing that might be said about it as a conclusion to a false premise is that if there must be censorship, it ought to be universal. There ought to be some unanimity of conclusion, but whatever advantage that might bring, we find a disadvantage of far greater weight in another invasion and another centralization of power in these United States, contrary to the very fundamentals upon which the states were federated together. The idea is becoming further removed all the time that this is a confederation of forty-eight commonwealths reserving each to itself certain inalienable rights. That was not the purpose of the founders of our country. I hope that day is far removed when any further invasions of the states' rights will be written into the fundamental or constitutional law of this

country. We have gotten along pretty well so far, this infant amongst the nations of the world, this country but a century and a half and a little more in age as compared with countries of the old world who write their history in terms of centuries and centuries beyond that. Yet with all the scarcity of years, due, in my opinion, to the very fundamentals of this country, its purposes and the strong foundation upon which it was builded, we have grown and grown until today we occupy the premier position in all the world. I am one of those old-fashioned enough to believe that before these documents upon which this country was founded are tampered with any further, we should have some assurance and some guarantee that improvements will follow, and where can that be within the scope of human ingenuity? That country is best governed which is least governed. That is a motto to which we should cling.

Here and there, there are little groups who spend so much time trying to determine an attractive target to shoot at: "What is there we can find fault with? What new idea, no matter how unsubstantial it might be, can we propound? We will attract the crowd. They will not understand it, but they will satisfy that indescribable something in every human breast that likes to find fault, criticize, because either of jealousy or incapacity, to tear down those who have made a success of things."

Well, I haven't much patience with them because I am rather satisfied with this world, this country and this city. It is all right with me. My apprehension is to hold what we have rather than divorce any part of it, destroy any atom of it or pull down any part of the structure. I am very glad of this opportunity to congratulate the National Board of Review after these twenty years of experience. I like its attitude. It is sensible, it is constructive, it is human, it is normal. It refuses to be eccentric. It apparently doesn't care about sensationalism and it prefers evidently to consider us all limited by the bounds of humanity. It rather looks upon us as heirs to all the shortcomings of mankind.

There are those who believe that as we foregather today and discuss this subject of censorship and indicate a disapproval of it that we ought to be raided, and yet they would rather that you and I would hide away and conspire according to the apparent system of those who oppose any liberality or any freedom. So it is that I hope that the American public will continue to support the National Board of Review, that this Board will be encouraged to be as sensible as it has been, as honest with itself and with the rest of our citizens as it has been in the past.

I think the motion picture industry need not be fearful about the criticism of those who do not see the pictures, but it must be careful of the criticism that will follow from the patrons of the theatres when the pictures cease to be entertaining, cease to be instructive, cease to be wholesome and cease to make for the entertainment that people really want. I know it is a pity and it is to be regretted, that patronage doesn't always follow the best work either in the theatre or in the motion picture. It is nothing less than pathetic. There is a very distinguished producer in the theatre in this city who seems to alternate each year in the class of production he makes. One year he does a very inspiring, very artistic thing and gets very little patronage. Of necessity, the next year he has to do one of the sensational kind and then he does business, but at least in his heart of hearts he is altruistic, he is artistic and he wants to be a public benefactor, because he does take the money that he has made out of the sensational, weird or even alleged licentious production, and puts it back the next year only to lose it in something that is intelligent and artistic. Who will find fault with that? Not in a democracy, not in an atmosphere that is said to be free and where liberty is supposed to reign.

That, or the responsibility for that, must be placed directly upon those who patronize that kind of entertainment; but whatever it is, the best results can only be had from within the industry and when the industry shall have decided, as it apparently has, that it will be progressive, that it will be wholesome and that it will provide entertainment that is enduring, then all those who criticize and knock, and all the legislation that can be written on all the statute books of the forty-eight states and into the laws enacted by Congress will never make a bit of difference, because even legislatures can go so far with enactment that it is possible for them to become so ridiculous that they will destroy the very thing that supports them and the very thing that gave them an opportunity to hold exalted public office.

Robert C. Bruce Returns from the Wilderness *

THE series of Nature films that Robert C. Bruce has just completed, after two or three years of camera work in Death Valley and Oregon, reaffirms and enhances the high place as a pictorial photographer he won for himself through his *Wilderness Tales* and numerous other scenics. We understand that these latest films of his are intended primarily for the non-theatrical field of exhibition; the pictures themselves are labeled instructional. That is far from a complete term for describing them, however. It is true that the pictures, which individually go by such appropriate titles as *The Work of the Wind, The Work of the Sand, The Work of the River,* and so forth, are instructional in the truest sense—vivid, accurate visualizations of the phenomena of Nature, with an underlying scientific basis. But they are also beautiful and imaginative and remarkably interesting as well so that discerning purveyors of motion picture entertainment should see in them a fine and profitable variety adapted to fit in with a high-grade theatre program. For what is entertainment but that which holds us through its interest, whether it moves or amuses us or appeals to our curiosity through the treatment of its special subject. The National Geographic Magazine is one of the most entertaining publications in the world.

These films are deserving of description as works of pictorial composition with the motion picture camera of an outstanding value. They are the works of one who both loves and understands Nature. Mr. Bruce is both student and artist—an artist with a sensitive feeling for material and a creative trend of treatment, a student not only of his subject but also of his art. In fact, as we have found a privilege in claiming more than once in the past, Mr. Bruce is one of the few genuine artists in America to use the motion picture as a medium.

The quality of his work is that of intelligence—a balanced perception of the thing that is significant and a patient insistence upon putting it on the screen in a way that makes it appeal through our sense of form and beauty. Through form and beauty what he wants us to understand he makes self-evident. For example: one film is a little illustrated textbook of simple geographical definitions. A cape, an isthmus, an island, a peninsula is so and so. Then we see them through the eye of his camera, which is merely his own artist's gaze and what it sees skillfully proportioned on the passing film in his camera box. The cape becomes a lovely shadowy form of land extending into the limitless sea that washes about it as though it were a bather's body; the isthmus is like a pattern that lets us see the land holding itself together by a link that the oceans tug at and forever strive to break; the island, ringleted by foam, floats as if at anchor, on the bay; the peninsula stretches out its graceful neck from its earthbound shoulders like a huge animal that drinks. Here is a fresh vision of earth and sea, of the air and color that cover them, and of the moods that they assume. What school child learning the dull definition in words of these things, would not be awakened at the picture—would not think, "I remember seeing that, but now I know better what I saw and what the words that describe it mean," or else, "Although I never really saw an isthmus, when I am asked what it is I shall remember that picture—that will help me to remember the words that describe it"? True, Mr. Bruce, your films are instructional, they visualize—and may all those educators who decry the lack of proper motion picture visual instruction learn the whereabouts of these and hasten to make use of them in the schools! And in the universities, too. But further than that, the general public should have a chance to see them. For what grown-up,

* *This appreciation of Mr. Robert Bruce's latest Nature films is the first of a short series. It takes the place in this issue of our regular Exceptional Photoplays department.*

An Island in Columbia River, Washington

from

Robert C. Bruce's "Descriptive Geography"

with the design and meaning of such phenomena of rock, air, water, so carefully and lovingly placed before him, would not be charmed by an art that is sincere, investigating and aesthetically directed—would not feel, "This makes the world around me more interesting, I shall look for these things the next time I go out," or again, "What I have seen in my journeys has been renewed and explained to me. This show has entertained because it has stirred my emotions"? Before some of Mr. Bruce's camera shots one says "Ah!" No, Mr. Bruce, your films, as we have said, are something more than mere instruction. Their teaching quality emanates from, it is secondary to, their seizure of Nature in her most signifying, which is to say her most natural appearances if we give our eye just that little slant at which you tilt your camera. But this you know, and that is your secret.

Why bother to make photoplays, one feels like asking while looking at these films. They are unique and satisfying. In their apparently simple compass is the great drama. They are like going on a picnic and coming home filled with the sight of wonders. Sea and earth are the unit, a unit divided, each half working on the other. The earth giving to the sea and the sea to the earth. Over all the clouds, the mist, the rain, the wind, the mirage, the sun, darkness and light. Patterns of land and patterns of water, moving and changing, passing from color to color, from form to form. Here is our physical and our spiritual world, whither we are born, where we feed and grow, develop and languish, whence, or to which, we return. Instructional indeed, these films —how better can text-books teach? One is not fooled by their pedagogical coating. In them one is learning from a poet.

W. A. B.

A Program of Research With Motion Pictures

By Harold Ellis Jones
Director of Research
Institute of Child Welfare, University of California

It was our pleasure several years ago when Professor Jones was with the Department of Psychology of Columbia University, to publish a very interesting report on his earlier researches in the field of motion pictures. The response which it received makes us happy to bring to our readers this further contribution dealing with his later researches made at the University of California.—Editor's Note.

IT has been pointed out that psychologists may feel entitled to an intimate interest in motion pictures, since one of the first attempts to create the illusion of motion occurred in the course of a psychological experiment. While this primitive movie was constructed nearly a century ago, the world waited seventy years until modern inventive genius made possible the first achievements in projection by means of films. Now that motion pictures have spread into all corners of the earth and have attained a primary place in the leisure interests of millions, psychologists are asked to lend their aid in studying this social phenomenon. The movies have grown so great that the average school child spends from ten to twenty per cent as much time in a moving picture theater as in a school, and surveys have shown that American children give a majority vote to the pictures as their "most preferred amusement".[1] The impressions which our children receive from the screen are undoubtedly vivid and enduring; we are not likely to overestimate the power of this medium to shape their their thoughts and their emotional interests.

If we wish to know more about the social psychology of the motion picture, its influence upon developing minds and its function as a social force, our hope of progress rests upon enlisting the support of trained and competent research workers. The laboratory scientist, however, feels reluctant to undertake studies in this field. Theaters are built for profit and not for social research, and a scientist has no desire to substitute the rialto for the laboratory. If, on the other hand, he is approached by agencies which are free from commercial interests in the movies, he sometimes finds that they have other interests no less compromising: an equipment of choice Victorian prejudices, or a devotion to some single track reform which an impartial investigator cannot in advance agree to support.

If we wish to attract able and disinterested students, we would do well to emphasize some of the unique privileges of work in this field. A film is a device which can be used to reproduce standard laboratory conditions. The laboratory scientist, with his weakness for ingenious apparatus must realize that there are few scientific instruments of greater ingenuity and precision than the modern motion picture projector. In a technical article which has been recently published,[2] the statement is made:

"Motion pictures offer the psychologist a well-controlled technique for laboratory experiments. Problems in attention, perception, and memory can be studied in the projection room under more standard stimulus conditions than is possible by ordinary group oral or visual methods. Repetitions are uniform, and are capable of being varied with a precise control of speed and exposure intervals; the film, furthermore, preserves its own record of the experiment, which can later be reviewed and transcribed as desired. In range of content, this medium provides a wide choice, from verbal subtitles to pictorial episodes which may carry the emotional tone and sensory fullness of a lived experience. Perhaps of chief importance, particularly in experimental work with adults, is the factor

[1] *Lehman, H. C. and Witty, P. A., The compensatory function of the movies. Journal of Applied Psychology. Nov.,* 1927. 33-41
[2] *Jones, H. E. assisted by Conrad, H. and Horn, A., Psychological Studies of Motion Pictures II. Univ. of Calif. Publication in Psychology.* 3:1928. 225-243.

of motivation; even in quite diverse groups it is possible, with "movies", to create a satisfactory level of effort through incentives which are intrinsic to the situation. In view of these and other advantages, it is surprising that so little use has been made of the motion picture in the psychological laboratory, and, as a subsequent development, that so little use has been made of psychologists in applied studies of motion picture production and exhibition."

In appealing to potential experts we should not require that they help us in solving some immediate practical problem, but rather we should attempt to point out the possibilities of genuinely controlled studies in this field, and we should make them understand that they will be able to carry on reputable scientific work without interference either from the promoters of pictures or from the promoters of possible premature reforms. We may hope that the practical gains will follow in due time, and that they will be all the more significant and useful because they are based on disinterested and sound research.

It may be worth while to list some of the problems which should be included in a study of the social psychology of motion pictures. This is not by any means a complete program, and the items are by no means of equal importance; as a first tentative formulation, the list may serve as a basis for discussion.

1. Who goes to the movies? In every school system a registry of school attendance is carefully kept. If we wish to study the effects of motion pictures, we must similarly first compile statistics of attendance. Interested groups in each community should know the age composition of audiences, the proportion falling in each age group, and how this proportion varies with different types of pictures. At the University of California we have constructed a multiple counter for obtaining records of this sort. An observer, sitting in an inconspicuous place near the entrance of a theater, manipulates the keys and records incoming patrons by sex and by estimated age, each person being assigned to one of six age groups on the counting instrument. An important item to record is the proportion of children attending at night, and the proportion attending without adults.

2. How often do people go to the movies? What is the frequency of attendance in various groups? This can be determined for the groups in which we are chiefly interested (school children) by means of suitably prepared record blanks which are distributed in the schools.

3. How are scholarship and intelligence related to frequency of attendance? The writer has reported the results of one investigation on this problem.[3] The following may be briefly stated as conclusions: It was found that school failures go to the pictures more often than school successes, but it was not at all clear that the more frequent attendance *caused* the poor scholarship. The children who were dull in intelligence tests were also slightly more frequent spectators at the pictures; the differences were very small, and interpretation was given that "for the most part, going to the movies is a symptom and not a cause; a symptom of interests which are sometimes healthy and sometimes unhealthy, but which in any event are bound up with our whole social system, and which cannot be radically altered by censorship, by keeping the children at home, or by any single means of social correction." These problems, however, need further and more detailed study, and it may be particularly valuable to make a careful clinical study of a selected group of school failures, with reference to their motion picture habits.

4. The relation should also be investigated between *frequency of attendance* and *emotional stability*, deportment in school, and various other character traits. Some work has already been done on these points, but has not yet been published. An interesting study has been made in New York of a group of grade children, whose "honesty" was tested by a comprehensive series of character tests. Some of these children were in the habit of attending pictures three times a week, and others less than once a week. It was found that in the group attending more frequently objectionable character traits occurred more often; the difference was fairly marked, but we may not say that the children had acquired the bad traits from the pictures. The origin of any character trait is extremely complex, rooted in our heredity and our early environment, and no doubt we tend to choose situations which will stimulate and favor the

[3] *Jones, H. E., Attendance at moving pictures as related to intelligence and scholarship. Parent-Teacher,* 4:1928. 17-20.

growth of characteristics which are already present. Thus, the child with delinquent tendencies will attend certain sorts of movies as a form of emotional exploitation; the movies may to some extent intensify tendencies which are already there. In the clinical records which have been compiled by members of the Psychology Department of the University of California, data are available concerning the habits of attendance and the motion picture preferences of a large number of delinquent children. This material has not yet been analyzed in order to determine the relations of cause and effect, but it seems well worth careful study. The effect of the movies upon the emotional life of children has also been considered, in collecting data from several hundred children concerning their habitual dreams. Certain kinds of pictures, such as *Chang,* and surprisingly, *Peter Pan,* appear very frequently in children's dreams, and often with evidence of emotional upset. It is too early, however, to draw any conclusions from this work.

5. A related approach would be a study of children's work in school, not as it is affected in general by frequency of attendance, but as it may be affected, in particular children, on the day following an exciting picture. It is common for teachers to assert that they can trace disturbances in classroom morale to some overstimulating picture which has recently been shown in the neighborhood. It would be well if we could put such findings on a more quantitative basis, with independent observers checking the teachers' judgments of deportment, and with a schedule of free movie admissions, in a neighborhood theater, for successive groups of children during the experimental period.

6. For obtaining certain sorts of information, the questionnaire method has some merit, particularly as it is possible to repeat the questionnaire and to obtain some measure of the consistency of report. With the cooperation of the school department of Berkeley, the Institute of Child Welfare of the University of California has recently collected over 1600 questionnaires from children 9 to 14 years of age, dealing with their leisure time interests, and with relevant data concerning their motion picture habits and attitudes.

7. Some success has been obtained in a "duration of interest" study, in which a child was permitted to look at a series of still pictures attached to pivoted frames. The stills represented a wide range of motion picture situations, and their differential appeal or interest value was measured by the length of time a child chose to view each photograph before turning to the next one. The salient problem here is the question of the responsiveness of children of pre-adolescent age to the sex element in pictures.

8. The preceding paragraphs have suggested a study of children's emotional responses to pictures, by means of questionnaire methods, clinical methods or interviews, and observation of subsequent behavior. A more direct attack upon the problem may be made by apparatus studies of emotional processes in children at the time when they are actually watching a picture. A discussion of this method has already been reported,[4] and some preliminary data have been collected from children and adolescents.

In this brief statement only a few of the more obvious problems have been noted, with no mention of some of the wider fields of investigation. As a means of entertainment the movies have risen to the first rank. As a force of education, in social relationships and even in international polity their indirect and implicit effects are tremendous. In understanding this factor, and in learning how to organize and control it for the best interests of the world community, we need the combined efforts of psychologists, sociologists and educators. The time will come when a unitary program of study will be directed from a central institute, or from a group of institutes, and the resulting contributions will be able to take the place of the present order of rumor and propaganda.

[4] *Jones, H. E., Psychological factors in the response to motion pictures. National Board of Review Magazine.* 2:1927, 4-6.

Mr. D. W. Griffith on the Censorship of Talking Films

Excerpt from his telegram to the National Board on the occasion of its Twentieth Anniversary Luncheon.

"I UNDERSTAND that the National Board of Review is contemplating a battle against censorship of the talking pictures. It is needless for me to say how much I approve of this as you know how for so many years I have battled against censorship of motion pictures in any form. . . . Our revolutionary fathers formed a government which while perhaps not perfect is the best that has ever existed in the world. In doing this they granted every human being the right of free speech through the Constitution of the United States which they brought forth. The bigots and fanatics are at work today in America trying to tell every human being that the only proper way for him to live and act and speak is as they do. . . . I am no longer young. It is of no importance to me personally if they enact a censorship of the human voice in the talking pictures. But if they censor the voice speaking in the talking pictures today then tomorrow they will censor all forms of speech and of the written word. And the day that they censor the spoken word, whether it is transmitted through the form of the talking pictures or any other way, that day we go back to mediaevalism and surrender our most precious symbol of liberty. All credit to your association because your association is like a staff of friends and advisors whose suggestions are helpful but which does not dictate and say, "This shall not be because I do not like it." Like a congress of equal fellow human beings the National Board of Review studies together and discusses that which is best to say and best to do and best to write, with the aim not to dictate but if possible to help. With very best wishes and sincere regrets that I am unable to be present in person at your Twentieth Anniversary. I am most sincerely yours,"

(signed) David W. Griffith.

The Motion Picture Learns to Talk

By Dr. Lee DeForest

Dr. DeForest delivered at the recent Annual Conference of the National Board a very comprehensive account of the sound film. The first part which dealt with the technical phase of the sound device was published in the February issue of the Magazine. The second part which is chiefly a prophecy made some years ago regarding the use of the sound film, a prophecy in great measure fulfilled, we are pleased to print below.—The Editor.

BUT returning now to the very best which sound pictures have to offer today, I feel that we have every reason to believe that the faith and vision of the pioneer have already been proven well justified. The best is, I maintain, exceedingly good. Granted that these high examplars are yet deplorably few, and brief, they serve as sure sign posts clearly pointing the paths along which this new art should proceed to attain its goal.

The radio broadcast has done much towards establishing a better understanding, a feeling of neighborliness amongst foreign nations. But I believe that sound films will accomplish even more in this direction. Take a concrete example just now in the public mind, the sending to Europe as America's unofficial representatives in the discussion of German finances of Messrs. Morgan and Young. Could a Phonofilm of President Coolidge addressing a selected audience and expressing his own views on this subject accompany this delegation, to be generally exhibited in Europe, especially in Germany, what a profoundly educative effect upon European publics it would exert—educative and in the most friendly way, leading to an understanding of America's point of view.

Occasions similar to this are continually arising in international politics, and the sound picture, the sound newsreel, is destined (in

fact has already begun) to bring to the public an appreciation of the real personalities of the rulers of other nations, a kindly feeling of neighborliness and understanding which no other medium, illustrated newspapers, nor the radio, can ever approach. And best of all, the message of the sound picture is not fleeting, not ephemeral. It is permanent, may be repeated indefinitely and everywhere; and at the last becomes an enduring memoir of matchless historic worth and conviction.

I believe we can little realize the swift rapidity with which the sound picture will hasten the time when the world will enjoy the benefits of a universal language.

A common tongue is the world's assured destiny. (This will, I firmly believe, be the English language). Good will, based on neighborliness and common understanding, will provide the way to enduring peace, an end to armaments and war.

I regard the mission of the sound film in this direction as of an importance that is difficult to over-estimate.

Nearly six years ago, basing my judgment then as to its future on what Phonofilm had already achieved, I made, in a public address, the following observations. As to their correctness, how well justified by actual subsequent developments and by the promise which the future still holds forth, I invite your carefully considered judgment.

In 1923 I said: "Those questions which have doubtless been passing through your minds since the topic of talking moving pictures was first called to your attention: 'Does the public want the talking picture?'; 'Is there room in the field of the silent drama for screen versions which are not all pantomime?'; 'Can the picture and the sound which go together so naturally in actual life, and which have been so completely divorced from each other since the beginning of the cinema art, be again brought together in a manner which shall be, if not entirely natural, at least artistic and pleasing?'

"If you ask whether the ordinary silent drama to which we are all so familiarized can in general be improved by the addition of the voice, the answer is unquestionably 'No'. Many, and in fact most of the moving picture artists are not trained on the legitimate stage; they have no adequate speaking voices—many in fact are incapable of speaking good English. The situation is exactly like that existing when moving pictures were first evolved. It was then the common idea that the motion picture drama would be nothing more than an attempt to photograph the ordinary drama of the stage, limited to the same confined situations, the same small scenes, the same few characters, etc. It did not take long to demonstrate the total failure of the new motion picture art to enter into successful competition with the drama along these lines. An entirely novel type of dramatic scheme and presentation was necessary before screen vertions were artistically possible. But Edison and the other motion picture pioneers had supplied a new medium, and it did not take the more enterprising, energetic and progressive producers long to see the entirely new possibilities which thus lay open to them, and to evolve an entirely new form of entertainment. How well they have succeeded in evolving a new art is attested by the immense financial success of the motion picture industry of today.

"The situation, therefore, as regards the future of Phonofilm, is today very similar to that which faced the new art of the silent picture when it was first realized that in order to fulfill its mission as a means of entertainment and education, it must not seek to follow blindly in the path of the legitimate drama. That it must take full advantage of the immensely wider ranges which are inherently its own property, and enter entirely new fields, which were by the very nature of things completely closed to the older form of stage pictures and stage entertainment. Thus, I claim that an entirely new form of screen drama can be worked out, taking advantage of the possibilities of introducing music and voice and appropriate acoustic effects, not necessarily through the entire action, but here and there, where the effects can be made much more startling, or theatrical, if you will, or significant, than is possible by pantomime alone, no matter how cleverly it may be worked out. It is incumbent on the scenario writers to see these possibilities, and to work up their situations and scenes around such acoustic effects as can be successfully brought out, rather than to follow the reverse principle of merely attempting to introduce acoustic effects and situations which are primarily better adapted to the pantomime art.

Musical Possibilities

"To reproduce in an artistic and pleasing manner, both musically and pictorially, operettas, entire acts of operas, selections by symphony orchestras, popular bands, the songs of concert singers whom the public admire but are seldom privileged to actually hear—to really popularize the playing of famous virtuosos on the piano or violin—there can be, I believe, no question as to the long felt vacant field which the Phonofilm is destined to fill. For here surely, the silent drama is totally lacking; and the too brief phonograph record, blind to sight, and leaving much to be desired in naturalness of tone quality can never be expected to qualify as a means of entertainment of public audiences.

Spoken Titles

"There are, moreover, many instances where the silent drama, as it actually exists today, can be improved by the introduction of spoken matter. And numberless cases where incidental music, which can be played only by adequate orchestras available solely in a few of the largest theatres can be successfully introduced into every medium sized motion picture theatre in the land. Similarly where the action and sequence of so many silent dramas are today badly interrupted by the necessity of reading long and elaborate titles and explanations on the screen. The reading of lengthy letters, telegrams, etc., could frequently be far more effectively rendered by a clear resonant voice, spoken, it may be entirely off the scene, and not necessarily by one of the principals. I can, in fact, picture some very dramatic effects which may be obtained where, perhaps, only one or two words or sentences spoken throughout the entire run of an otherwise silent drama, will grip the attention, and startle the imagination as does the occasional introduction of a hand tinted object in an otherwise black and white picture.

"I intend here only to point out that there lie dormant in the Phonofilm now possibilities for obtaining dramatic and genuinely artistic effects which lie entirely out of the range of the silent drama. It is rather for the progressive and imaginative producers and scenario writers to act on these hints to evolve something which the public has for a long time, in an articulate and half recognized manner, been expecting. To those who have the requisite daring and initiative will come the greatest need of award.

Educational Importance

"So much for the Phonofilm drama. But there are other fields for the useful combination of picture with voice which can admit of no serious dispute. Foremost in this category I would place the educational film. Unquestionably, most of the educational films, especially for class room work, could be greatly improved in interest to the student and in clarity of the lesson conveyed, if their presentation was accompanied by a lucid explanation, delivered in the first place by some authority on the subject who is far more competent to lecture thereon than are the majority of instructors who are presenting the film to their classes. The proper matter, concise and to the point, will thus always accompany the picture, not too much and not too brief, and information be thus conveyed which the picture alone is quite inadequate to confer.

Scenic Effects

"Similarly in the presentation of scenic films, travelogues, etc. Their interest and beauty can be immeasurably enhanced by virtue of verbal descriptions couched in impressive and sometimes poetic terms. Consider, moreover, the appeal of the fine pictures of the great outdoors, the vision of the horizons, views from some mighty mountain top—the emotions awakened in the heart of the artist who gazes out upon some noble forest scene, over the magnificent vistas of far-reaching valleys, the deep sentiments which are aroused when one stands beneath the trees of some lofty cathedral grove! These sentiments, these emotions, can only be adequately expressed by appropriate music, or perchance to the accompaniment of the poem of some great master. All such music and all such poetry can be interwoven with the picture, and its beauty and its message thereby elevated to ennobling heights to which the silent picture, however lovely, has never yet attained.

News Weeklies

"The weekly news items which are now recognized as an appropriate part of every film program can be made vastly more interesting and informative to the audience, if, in a few terse sentences, the scene depicted be also described, or the situation, which is frequently so inadequately told by the picture itself, be interpreted by the voice of some one well informed. Once this form of pictorial news ser-

(*Continued on page 23*)

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

Looking "Matineeward"

By Mrs. J. A. McRae

Mrs. McRae, Chairman of the Juniors' Matinees of the Charlotte (N. C.) Better Films Committee, brings to her work an enthusiastic interest which could not fail to result in such a report as the following.—The Editor.

FROM the standpoint of attendance, from the standpoint of the attitude of the children of Charlotte, from the standpoint of turning the public mind Junior "Matineeward," and from the standpoint of community service, the Junior Matinee of Charlotte, N. C., has had a most successful year.

Our average attendance has more than doubled. It is the exception and not the rule when a weekly attendance drops below six hundred, while around eight hundred is our usual number, and we not infrequently play to a capacity house of twelve hundred. With marked interest and enthusiasm of all concerned, the matinee ran practically all summer —leaving off only for three weeks in August.

We have had the co-operation of the Parent-Teachers of the City. Each association has a motion picture committee, the chairman of which makes a report at each regular monthly meeting, and in this way we keep constantly before the mothers the form of wholesome entertainment being provided for their children, and are able to discourage promiscuous attendance upon movies which may or may not be suitable for children.

The matinee opens each Saturday morning at ten o'clock. The ticket window opens at nine-thirty, at which time Parent-Teacher chaperones and Girl Reserve ushers take their places inside. Usually the organist plays some sweet melody while the children are being seated. At the entrance, the matinee and chaperone chairmen, assisted by Boy Scouts greet the children, line them up and keep things going smoothly. We also have present, always, two firemen, thanks to our Fire Chief.

We open with the flag salute—impressively done by Boy Scouts and our prologue chairmen. Announcements are next made. Sometimes we have a prologue, which ties up with the feature or program, sometimes community singing, and at times neither, depending on the length of the feature picture, and this in turn is followed by a comedy.

We book our pictures only a few weeks in advance. The Imperial Theatre, where the matinee is held, is one of the Publix Theatres, and I cannot speak too highly of the help and the interest manifested by our manager and the booker in the matter of film selection. Our manager is especially thoughtful about booking for himself for the last half of the week a comedy suitable for the matinee. Because of this we get better and newer comedies than we otherwise might. For instance, we have the Collegians about as soon as they are released, to the great delight of the children. Among the Features shown this past year are, *Regular Scout, Alaskan Adventure, Shanghai Bound, Bugle Call, Speedy, Freckles, Chang, The Gaucho, Vanishing Pioneer, Slide, Kelly, Slide, West Point, Warming Up, The Magic Garden, The Freshman, High School Hero, Robin Hood, One Minute to Play, Girl Shy, Thief of Bagdad, Old Ironsides, Quality Street.*

By means of slides we greet our guests and carry worth while messages to the children. Our Public Librarian prepares a slide each week, signing herself "The Library Lady"—our idea being to help the children get the library habit. Whenever possible, she "ties up" with some date or event on our program with perhaps a suggestion for follow-up research. Recently she has had a sort of serial which gets over the idea that books are not just books, but faithful, helpful friends to be wisely chosen and deserving, to say the least, an appreciation evidenced by kindly treatment. We frequently use a little "Matinee Creed" written for us by our good friend, the editor, of the Junior Observer. The children are always reminded of "Mother's Day" and other

dates of appeal and importance with a suggestion given for their participation in celebration thereof.

We advertise in many ways—through news items, announcements, lovely posters to place on the Bulletin Board in each school. Our biggest publicity plan however is this—both the Public School Chronicle and the Junior Observer—special Sunday sections for school children of our two big dailies—carry each Sunday a write-up of the matinee for the following Saturday. Miss Mary Pressley and Miss Millie Shelby the editors, are real friends of the matinee and we are indeed grateful to them for their interest and attractive write-ups and to these newspapers for this splendid service. Two little reporters in each school, one on each paper, are given weekly passes for clipping and posting on their bulletin board the write-ups of the matinee.

In the summer when the schools were closed and school papers not issued, the three Publix Theatres ran a trailer for us a number of times each week. Playground leaders too, were very kind to make announcements on the playgrounds for us.

Now and then we have a "Buddie Matinee." For this we give out tickets the week before, dated, etc., and reading thusly:

My "Buddie" may come to the matinee free,
If he comes with this ticket, my dime, and me.

We like visitors and special guests. Our chaperones always bring their visitors along, and during summer the children had the privilege of bringing their out-of-town visitors with them and we threw a slide on the screen welcoming them by name and telling whose guests they were. Last spring, we took the schools in turn and had the teachers as special guests. We wanted them to know first hand all about the matinee.

The Boy Scouts and the Girl Reserves of the city were entertained once each, this year, and we had for them especially attractive programs. In each instance they marched through town in a body and were quite thrilled over the courtesy and attention. Early in the fall we co-operated with the Carolina Theatre in a big special matinee for children, the first showing of *The Air Circus.*

On several occasions we have had the children from our two orphanages as guests. We had the co-operation of the Auto Inn and Eferd's Department Store in a real Thanksgiving party for them. The Auto Inn furnished the conveyances and Eferd's the "goodies." At Christmas we sponsored, along with the Charlotte *News* and the Carolina Theatre, a big movie party for the unfortunate children of the city. For two weeks the *News* carried daily a story of the Santa Claus picture to be shown, their own courtesy, and other features of the party. In this connection we got quite a lot of publicity and were able to perform a real community service.

All this has been made possible through the team work of the organization, co-operating individuals, groups and newspapers, and a well-wishing public. We are fortunate to have as prologue chairman, the children's own friend, Mr. Otto Gullickson, the head of the Physical Education Department of our City Schools. Marked improvement in order is largely due to his influence. Beloved and looked up to by the children of Charlotte, rudeness and thoughtlessness seem to slip away from them when in his presence. I point also with deep appreciation to the co-operation and faithfulness to duty of the vice-president, Mrs. J. A. Gardner, the chaperone chairmen, Mrs. S. N. Tison and Mrs. J. M. Alexander, and the chairman of the P. S. A. Division, Mrs. W. C. Mitcham, and ever and always to the loyal backing of our President and other members of the Better Films Committee.

Lastly, and best of all, our committee has the blessed assurance of the appreciation of the children themselves. Week by week we are becoming better friends. More and more they seem to feel that the Junior Matinee is their very own. Words of appreciation that find their way to our ears, their reactions to programs, are sometimes very touching. We have every reason to believe that, taken as a whole, they look on the Better Films Committee in general and the Junior Matinee Committee in particular, as friends indeed.

THE Port Chester (N. Y.) Parent-Teacher Association is sponsoring a series of matinees for the children of the local schools. One of their programs consisted of *Alice in Wonderland,* two reels of *Heide, George Washington* and one of the escapades of Felix the cat. The film project has met with the most favorable approval from the mothers as well as the students of the schools.

The Negative Wins

"RESOLVED: That Children Under Ten Should Be Excluded From Motion Picture Theatres," was the subject of a debate which aroused much enthusiasm and interest at a combined meeting of the Senior and Junior Women's Clubs of Oneonta (N. Y.). This debate was the part of a program in charge of the Oneonta Motion Picture Study Club, which has a large representation from the Women's Club. It is an affiliated committee of the National Board of Review. Both the negative and the affirmative sides brought out their points clearly and concisely but the audience to whom the judgment was left, gave its decision to the negative side which was upheld by Mrs. George W. Bockes and Mrs. Bruce Colburn, the latter taking the place of Mrs. Stuart Macafee who was absent because of illness. A few of the highlights brought out by the victors are the following. A child's development depends on his primitive senses and that at an early age and during adolescence sight far surpasses the others, he best understands that which he beholds, therefore pictures, including motion pictures, are very essential to a child's educational and recreational life; it has been definitely proven by educators that when one of two equally endowed groups of children is shown moving pictures in connection with its work it rapidly surpasses the other. In connection with theatre programs, educational films of science, manufacturing and travel are shown as well as the newsreels—the unfolding of the life of a butterfly, trips over mountains, deserts and across the sea mean far more to the child than any books on biology and geography; the newsreel is the child's newspaper—the Chinese emperor and his bride, a long line of majestic battle ships, the Graf Zeppelin, what child under ten would ever learn history-in-the-making from a daily? Yale University has produced a series of pictures, from the time of Columbus up to the Civil War, that might well take the place of text books for the younger child.

Children are hero worshippers and the screen gives them heroes. Fairbanks is a perfect example of physical fitness and he stands for valor, chivalry, clean living and right thinking in his pictures. The Western is a great favorite with the children because they have the normal craving for thrills and action that must be satisfied, the hero is always upstanding, courageous and determined to do his duty, no parent could object to these ideals for a child under ten, evil is made to appear evil and the small boys always applaud vigorously and wildly when the villain is caught and punished. The theatres mean much to the city child, they keep him off the city streets where danger lurks, both physical and moral, they give a taste of the great outdoors to the child whose only playground is the pavement. Some pictures may be untrue to life but so are nursery rhymes, fairy tales and juvenile stories. Much that would be objectionable to adults passes completely over the head of children. The worthwhile music of the orchestras and vitaphones which have succeeded the bored, improviser of the out-of-tune piano are real assets to the child's musical development. Many famed psychology experts, lawyers, social service workers, heads of institutions and so on, have testified that they know of no cases on record that children have committed criminal offenses due to the influence of motion pictures.

THE Better Films Committee of Birmingham (Ala.) at their annual election re-elected all their officers, the officers being Mrs. B. T. Rochester, chairman; Mrs. J. L. Smith, vice-chairman; Mrs. Neil R. Wallace, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Myrtle R. Snell, recording secretary, and Miss Emily R. McBride, secretary. Mrs. John Yeatman gave a most interesting and instructional talk on the German cinema art discussing particularly Max Reinhardt. The work accomplished by this committee during the past year is most praiseworthy. They have sponsored forty-four juniors' matinees, twelve private screenings for the members and the press and two invitational showings, *Disraeli* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.* Six thousand three hundred free admissions have been granted to the Mercy Home and underprivileged children and transportation has been furnished chil-

dren of the Mercy Home. A scholarship has been given through the Alabama Federation of Women's Clubs and more than seventy-five dollars has been given as prizes to the local Parent-Teacher organizations. Among the pictures shown recently at Birmingham juniors' matinees were *Grandma's Boy,* starring Harold Lloyd, *Calford in the Movies, Dare-Devil's Reward* with Tom Mix, *Peter Pan, Alaskan Adventures, Kickin' Through,* a Collegian comedy, Barney Google comedies, Aesop fables and newsreels.

MR. AND MRS. MARTIN JOHNSON, that unusual pair of African observers, invited the Miami Better Films Council to a showing of some special films, in connection with the regular showing of *Simba* at the Fairfax Theatre in that city. The Council had been active in supporting this exceptional picture and the Johnsons wished to repay the compliment. The motion picture editor of the Miami *Herald* said the following in regard to this film—"Though, I saw *Simba* at its preview, I believe I'd like to watch the rhinos and lions and giraffes and elephants and the rest of the citizens of British East Africa strut their hides and horns again. That's a peculiar appeal in *Simba,* they tell me, you can watch it over and over again without getting bored. Another argument in defense of naturalization in acting." The Miami Council featured another picture which is an excellent argument in defense of naturalization in acting. At a recent Juniors' Matinee they showed *Chang,* the exceptional photoplay which is among the few Commander Byrd included in his collection on his present South Pole trip. The educational picture had an especial appeal for the young people and was entitled *Dog Days* while the comedy had a most appropriate name for the finis of a matinee, *Leave 'Em Laughing.* The prologue was in charge of Miss Martha Bartholomew and was given through the courtesy of the Miramar Elementary School. The pupils of Mrs. H. J. Rice presented a most attractive dance, "A Doll Shop," all the participants being dressed as dolls of the different nationalities and performing to the typical national music of the country they represented.

MRS. CHARLES T. OWENS, Chairman of Motion Pictures for the Pennsylvania State D. A. R., addressed the Delaware County Chapter in session at Swarthmore the latter part of January. Mrs. George H. Hughes is the local D. A. R. chairman of this work, and as such has conducted children's matinees during the spring and summer months. "The success of the pictures today," said Mrs. Owens, "is chiefly due to the intelligent treatment of public opinion by the various organizations through the country, and to the ever-ready response of the industry to suggestions and constructive criticism." Mrs. Owens has been particularly interested in special showings for children in Pennsylvania. Only carefully selected pictures are shown. "We could never have accomplished all we have with children's matinees," said Mrs. Owens, "if we had not had the interested support of the exhibitors themselves." In regard to sound films Mrs. Owens' opinion was, "It is still too soon to say what the future of sound may be but it will always have its place in the pictures of tomorrow, though it seems doubtful that all-talking films will take the place of the silent screen. There is something too nice about silence for us ever to give it up. People like to go into a darkened theatre, see the picture, listen to the music, and relax. However, in this, as in everything connected with the entertainment business, the public will make its own choice and place its own order. The industry will fill the order whatever it may be."

AT a meeting of a local P.-T. A. in Macon (Ga.) Mrs. Piercy Chestney, President of the Better Films Committee of that city, gave a most interesting and instructive talk on "Moving Pictures and the Kind Our Children Ought to See." Mrs. Chestney stressed the fact that a child cannot attend the pictures during the week, prepare the lessons for the following day and get the proper amount of sleep. For this reason, it has been found to be the better plan to allow the small children to attend only the Saturday morning matinee, which is arranged entirely for children and shows nothing that will be harmful to them in any way.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
FRANCES C. BARRETT

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

The Bondman

Directed by.....*Herbert Wilcox*
Featuring.....*Norman Kerry*

Novel by Sir Hall Caine

AN English production telling a story of love and vengeance. Sworn to kill his step-brother who is living on the distant Isle of Man and whom he has never seen, a young man departs from Sicily. He arrives at his destination but fails to find his brother. Later an uprising in Sicily causes both brothers to be sent to the sulphur mines and unknown to each other are chained together. During an eruption of a volcano the Sicilian saves the life of his step-brother and goes as his bondman so that he can return to his wife. The scenes were shot in the actual background of the story with the help of the author, and present interesting customs of the countries, as the Harvest Festival in the Isle of Man and the Sicilian Vendetta.

For family audience including young people.
(World Wide—8 reels)

The Canary Murder Case

Directed by.....*Malcolm St. Clair*
Featuring.....*William Powell*, *Louise Brooks*

Novel by S. S. Van Dine

AN entertaining mystery story. A chorus girl called "The Canary" is found murdered. Suspicion falls on many. The one who is actually guilty arranges a good alibi by means of a phonograph record. The alibi is not foolproof, however, as he discovers. The plot which is well worked out keeps you in suspense and the less agreeable aspects of the story are well handled.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—7 reels)

Cheyenne

Directed by.....*Arthur Rogell*
Featuring.....*Ken Maynard*

Original screen story by Bennett Cohen

THIS Western is built around a real rodeo. The hero is the favorite for the championship of the big event at Cheyenne when he finds out that a girl has staked everything on her entries in the rodeo. He wants to ride her mounts but his employer fraudulently changes his contract so as to bind him not to ride for her. The hero circumvents this difficulty and rides the girl's entries to a thrilling championship victory. A fine picture for lovers of horses and daring horsemanship.

For family audience including children.
(First National—6 reels)

Clear the Decks

Directed by ..... *Joseph Henaberry*
Featuring ..... *Reginald Denny*
Story "When the Devil Was Sick" by E. J. Rathe

A GOOD comedy with plenty of action. Having fallen in love with a girl at first sight, an impetuous youth decides to sail that afternoon on the same steamer with her but finds he cannot get passage. Fortune smiles on him however when he meets a sick friend of his who is booked to sail on that steamer, and who is to meet his nurse, whom he has never seen, at the dock. Finding that his friend does not want to go he suggests changing places. Things after all do not turn out so well for him. The nurse has brought a goat on board—goat's milk having been prescribed for the patient. And moreover he is kept in bed by the nurse, but he finally makes his escape and attempts to see the girl. In the meantime a valuable necklace belonging to her has been stolen and he discovering the crooks, explains his reason for the ruse and he and the girl confess their love.

For family audience including young people.

(Universal—6 reels)

Desert Nights

Directed by ..... *William Nigh*
Featuring ..... *John Gilbert, Mary Nolan*
Original screen story by John Thomas Neville and Vale Van Every

A THRILLING desert drama. A gang of thieves raid the office of an African diamond mine and carry the manager off with them seeking to escape over the desert. They are soon lost on the trackless sands and have to release the manager from his shackles in order that he may lead them to safety. The terrible heat and thirst bring out the yellowness of the leader of the thieves as well as the fineness of his girl accomplice as she falls in love with the manager. The picture gives a real sense of hardships actually endured under a pitiless sun. The manager dupes the thief by replacing the diamonds with pebbles and returns to the mine where the thief is apprehended as he straggles in, exhausted.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—7 reels)

The Dummy

Directed by ..... *Robert Milton*
Featuring ..... *Ruth Chatterton, Mickey Bennett*
Play by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford

A CLEVER all-talking detective comedy drama. A small boy who worms his way into a detective agency is hired by them. Their plan is to have him kidnapped by a notorious kidnapping gang suspected of having taken the small daughter of wealthy parents. The boy adds a brilliant idea when he suggests that he pretend to be deaf and dumb so he can learn more. The plan works well and the boy is taken to the house where the little girl has been hidden and later they are both moved to a lodge in the mountains. Unfortunately the boy talks in his sleep and gives away the plot, but he has managed to send word to the detectives where he is and they come in time to save both the children and to capture the kidnappers. The cast includes several stars from the stage.

For the family audience including children.

(Paramount—6 reels)

*Hearts in Dixie

Directed by ..... *Paul Sloane*
Featuring ..... *All Negro Cast*
Original screen story by Walter Weems

A COLORFUL picture of Southern plantation life with lots of good singing, dancing and talking. It is an all colored cast with the exception of a white physician, and contains some notable acting, especially on the part of Stepin Fetchit who plays the role of an indolent, care-free negro to perfection. The picture is a series of episodes rather than a connected story. There is a picturesque wedding with a great deal of dancing by young and old and a fine scene on the levee when the old river steamer makes a landing, an event of first class importance to all the colored folks. The picture successfully captures the charm of the old negro life just after the Civil War and the sound reproductions are uniformly good.

For family audience including children.

(Fox—7 reels)

The Leatherneck

Directed by ..... *Howard Higgin*
Featuring ..... *William Boyd*
Original screen story by Elliott Clawson

THE Three Musketeers are always good. Put them into the uniform of the U. S. Marines with a modern story of adventure and comradeship and they become just as glamorous as the original Dumas trio with their lace cuffs and their befeathered hats. In this picture the dramatic effect is heightened by having the story told by one of them on trial to account for his two friends, one of whom is dead and the other out of his mind. The setting is China with a revolutionary back-ground. The three boys have run into a Russian refugee, and his attractive daughter, who has an interest in some potash mines. Heckla, a buccaneer of shady antecedents proposes the despoilation of the Russian and is promptly beaten up by the boys. In revenge he stages a revolutionary riot, killing the Russian and abducting his daughter. One by one the boys slip away from the barracks to even up accounts. A stirring story of adventure, well told.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—9 reels)

The Redeeming Sin

Directed by ..... *Howard Bretherton*

Featuring ..... *Dolores Costello*, *Conrad Nagel*, *Lionel Barrymore*

Original screen story by R. V. Jefferson

A MELODRAMATIC romance of the Paris underworld. A cafe dancer's little brother, whom she idiolizes, is shot during a robbery. His sister rushes him to a young doctor who cannot save his life. The girl thinks that the doctor has willfully neglected saving the child becauce of what she is. She plays up to him planning to break his heart and finally to give him into the hands of her comrades. In spite of herself, she falls in love with him and is willing to sacrifice herself for him. The production is well directed and the cast is a favorite one.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—8 reels)

Strange Cargo

Directed by ..... *Benjamin Glazer*

Featuring ..... *Lee Patrick*, *Frank Reider*, *Kyrle Bellew*

Original screen story by Benjamin Glazer and Kyrle Bellew

A MURDER mystery story which takes place entirely on a luxurious yacht. It is the owner himself who is murdered and apparently he deserved it. The captain of the ship holds an inquiry with everybody under suspicion. The ship's doctor who is a fugitive from justice and who had reason to hate the owner of the yacht seems a likely lead. But suspicion leaves him to fasten in turn upon everybody in the party. Who is finally uncovered in a hidden cupboard and how he figures in the plot, well, that is part of the mystery which you will enjoy.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—8 reels)

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*Two Days

Directed by ..... *George Stabovoy*

Featuring ..... *I. E. Zamychkovski*

Original screen story by S. M. Lazurin

A DRAMA of social conflict in the Russia of today revolving around the central figure of an old family retainer who cannot forget his loyalty to his former master. He is left alone to take care of the estate when the family flees from the approaching revolutionists. His efforts are concentrated upon saving the young heir who has accidentally been left behind. His own son, long disappeared, turns up as a revolutiontary leader. The old man is tossed about in the ebb and flow of revolutionary and reactionary fortunes of war. When the young heir whose life he has saved denounces him, his mind apparently gives way and he burns down the whole estate with its inmates and is then shot to death by the revolutionists. I. E. Zamychkovski gives an excellent interpretation.

For the mature audience.

(Amkino—7 reels)

NON-FEATURES

The Belle of Samoa

Movietone. The misadventures of two travelers who violate a native Samoan law. The film is largely singing by a native troupe.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—2 reels)

The Bishop's Candlesticks

An all-talking picture. The episode of the stealing of the candlesticks in "Les Miserables."

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—2 reels)

A Dominion of Diversity

(Lyman H. Howe's Hodge Podge)

Scenic of Canada.

For family audience including children.

(Educational—1 reel)

Friendship

Movietone drama. Friends who try to disillusion a man about a woman by giving him proofs of her bad behavior find that he has already married her. A case of overzealous friendship.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—3 reels)

The Hawaiian Love Call

Hawaiian love story of a girl betrothed to a man she does not love.

For family audience including children.

(Tiffany-Stahl—1 reel)

Jungle Kings and Queens of the Screen

(Our World Today Series)

Movie lions and lionesses; views of Greek mountain cliff monasteries; a wedding among the Dyack tribe of Africa.

For family audience including children.

(Educational—1 reel)

King Cotton

(World We Live In Series)

Scenic showing the growth and cultivation of cotton.

For family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

Napoleon's Barber

A dialogue movietone. An incident in the life of Napoleon, before Waterloo, when a fanatical barber lost his chance to kill the Emperor because he did not recognize him. Fine acting.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—3 reels)

Schubert's Songs

A musical number of the well-known songs of this famous composer.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Alpine Antics

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald the Lucky Rabbit goes to the aid of his girl in the Alps.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

Ask Dad

Slapstick Comedy. A boy is in love with his father's secretary, so is the father only he does not realize it until he believes she loves someone else.

For family audience including young people.

(Educational—2 reels)

The Diplomats

Farce in which two comedians as burlesque diplomats procure the incriminating document from the susceptible fat lady and save the king. Featuring Clark and McCullough.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—4 reels)

False Alarm Fire Company

Very amusing skit of a fire chief and his men who were too busy playing cards to go to a fire.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Flying Yeast

(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat monkeys with the yeast and the house flies up and lands on a dirigible and thus he is claimed the first house stowaway.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

His Angel Child

Slapstick. Thinking his neighbor's baby is his, a man kidnaps it and trouble follows.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—2 reels)

Ko-Ko's Reward

(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko finds the artist's daughter and gets his reward.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

The Lumberjack

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald finds gold in a tree that he chops down.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

Marching On

Movietone. Chick Sales does his well-known impersonation of a civil war veteran who knew Lincoln.

For family audience including children.

(Fox—2 reels)

Newlywed's Angel Child

Snookum's gets his picture taken under difficulties.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

(*Continued from page* 14)

vice has been adequately introduced, I venture to say that the average audience will feel that without the spoken accompaniment these pictures have lost their grip, their lively interest.

COMEDIES

"In the realm of comedy immense possibilities for the Phonofilm unquestionably lie. The humor of many ludicrous situations can be screamingly increased if the right words, the right jest, were spoken at the right time, in the proper dialect or vernacular or tone of voice. Similarly, in animated cartoons, where the little animals or mannikens can speak their funny thoughts as well as act their funny ways, the humor of this new type of comedy can be readily doubled.

GREAT MEN

"The filming of notable men, characters in the public eye, presidents and rulers, candidates for public office, etc., will be manifoldly more interesting and genuine to the audience when their voices are also reproduced, instead of the present more or less inane mockery of their moving lips accompanied by silence. Picture for the moment what the Phonofilm will mean in perpetuating our really great men for coming generations. How priceless now would be the film reproduction of Lincoln delivering his immortal Address at Gettysburg, or of Roosevelt as he stood before the Hippodrome audience at his last public appearance, delivering a message to his countrymen, the inspiration of which has already been, how sadly, lost. Could we now see and hear Edwin Booth as Hamlet, Irving as Richelieu, Mary Anderson as Juliet—for real comparison, not based on treacherous and fading memories, with our present day 'great' tragedians! None can deny the need to our present thoughtless generation of frequently hearing and seeing in their exalted moments our really great men reproduced from time to time for the benefit and uplift and inspiration of us all. That these great moments in the lives of great men shall not be forever lost to our descendants, is one of the debts which those who shall come after us will owe to the film which records both the voice and visage of the nation's leaders. And thus I ask you, judge not the usefulness of the Phonofilm by this present accomplishment, but rather by its promise of finer things soon to be achieved!"

There is little that I can add to this statement of the possibilities of Phonofilm, as I reviewed them six years ago. Many of the things which I then stated as possibilities have become realities—the talking newsreel for instance, and the use of sound effects in cartoon reels. The development of the new technique of producing pictures has come more slowly, but I believe, now the more enterprising of the producers have fully realized that talking motion pictures furnish the scope for a form of entertainment as distinct from the two now existing stage and silent screen, as these two differ. The progress has started in the right direction, but I am just as sure now as I was in 1923, that talking pictures will provide an entertainment that will be just as pleasing, just as artistic and just as amenable to progress along the scope which is inherently its own, as either of the other two, and because of these things it will be equally successful for the theatre.

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

offers through its

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An Opportunity to Promote Better Motion Picture Programs in Your Home Theatre

The Better Films Committee, or Motion Picture Study Club, plan has been found by many committees to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

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Selected Pictures Catalogue (annual)		25c
Selected Book-Films (annual)		10c
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Weekly Guide to Selected Pictures	a year	$2.50

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. IV, No. 4 April, 1929

Anna May Wong in "Piccadilly" (*see page 8*)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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APR 25 1929

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Sound Sense

IN the April issue of *Children*, The Parents' Magazine, Professor Walter B. Pitkin comments upon the future of the talkies and their effect upon screen entertainment in the following prophetic strain:

"We hereby file our official forecast on the moral effect of the talkies. We assert that the ear is more moral than the eye. And we predict that the talkies will uplift the movies more than all reformers ever can."

The prophecy, from our observation of talking pictures already reviewed and the trend they indicate, has every chance of being fulfilled. Professor Pitkin, a sound psychologist and a close student of the motion picture, has put his fingers upon a development which is predicated by the very nature of this added form of expression which the movies have acquired by the use of speech.

For the ear, if not intrinsically more moral than the eye, (it has been held by many in their warning against the motion picture as an instrument of moral offense that the thing seen leaves a more indelible impression than the thing heard) is at least more instinctively censorious, more responsive to the psychological censor which functions subjectively in all of us and builds up our inner standard of restraint. There are many things which would become offensive if put into words or if already presented to the eye were also commented upon. Professor Pitkin elaborated upon this recently in an address before the Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee by pointing out that certain scenes and incidents in the silent picture would have been offensive if accompanied by oral comment. The eye could slide over them but the lips would falter. They will have to be omitted from the talkie of the future.

But to our mind the improvement in talking pictures will not stop there. These are, after all, the negative virtues of omission and avoidance. The gain will come in the department of intelligence as well as of morals. We must not forget that speech is the medium through which our intelligence manifests itself. In this respect the motion picture is really in the state of the child which has begun to speak. When the child begins to speak it gives us its first manifestations of its intellectual capacities. Concurrently we begin to judge the child by a certain intellectual standard, to make certain demands upon it.

Something of this sort is taking place with the talkie. For in talking it must say something. And the thing it says, the plot situation and the conflict between characters which it outlines in terms of dramatic dialogue will have to meet the same test of rationality which prevails upon the stage. Unless we are very much mistaken this means that some of the favorite plots of the movies will have to be scrapped. It must be remembered that when the movies got under way they seized with avidity upon all the shopworn plots which the theatre had discarded because they could no longer stand the intellectual test of theatre audiences. They were the laughing stock of earnest students taking courses in dramatic writing at our colleges or were

kicking about in cheap houses devoted exclusively to melodramas.

The silent movie could use these old plot situations, could revitalize them with a fresh scenic investiture. The screen through its hundred-fold greater flexibility of set and scene could disguise the psychological staleness and immaturity of these plots. It did so with a will, delaying the development of the original scenario, keeping the motion picture at its glittering childish level.

With the development of the talkie that is no longer possible. The screen from now on must increasingly face the same criterion as the stage. The simpering heroine who is so dumb that she never suspects that the preposterous villian has evil designs upon her until he locks the door and launches an attack which is forever frustrated by the hero, must go. For the moment she opens her mouth she will reveal a degree of imbecility which will make an audience of any degree of intelligence impatient of listening to her fate. Thus to Professor Pitkin's greater morality of the eye we would add the greater discrimination of the intelligence as a factor in improving the talking picture. Not that these two are unrelated. For if greater intelligence will not make for better morals what thing this side of magic will?

A RECENT issue of *Film Daily* contains a timely warning about a certain tendency in talking pictures to go in for ultra-sophistication in the dialogue sequences. Mr. Maurice D. Kann, in an editorial, makes the valid point that it is a great mistake that the country as a whole is in a mood to accept the wise-cracks and the spicy dialogue to which cosmopolitan audiences in the big cities have become accustomed on the stage. The industry here faces a problem of voluntary self-editorial guidance which it will do well to exercise in its own interests. Mr. Kann entitles his advice on the sound film "Step Carefully" and says:

"Remember the family. Three words that producers might well adopt as a permanent slogan and with them as a basis select their story material with discretion. The backbone of theatre attendance and, consequently, the prosperity of the entire business is family trade. The sensibilities of the mob may be flouted, but the industry cannot get away with it forever.

Impressionable minds must be guarded and carefully moulded. The head of every family will tell you this. If the tendency in motion pictures, for instance, is to produce entertainment in the guise of questionable themes, there can be but one out for motion pictures.

Sound and the possibilities it has opened up via the dialogue route tend to do this. Sophistication is being heaped on films at too rapid a gait. For proof, you need but turn to a number of current talking pictures. And so we again urge that the family be borne in mind.

There is something in this industry's structure aside from the New Yorks and Chicagos."

"I DO not believe that even the most perfect 'talkies' will kill the silent film. In my opinion, after their first flush of novelty, they will take second place in the programs of the cinema theatres, among the newsreels and the comics, and then only to reproduce the brief remarks of some famous person, an operatic solo, duet or chorus. It must be remembered that the vast majority of the people who go to the cinema do so in order not to be obliged to listen to the human voice, but to procure a brief respite from the sounds which are so nerve-racking during all the rest of the day."—Cosmo Hamilton, novelist.

MILITARY instruction by means of talking pictures is being sponsored by government officials in Washington. Three films have already been made and successfully shown to willing watchers and listeners. More are soon to follow. One picture shows an infantry battalion in operation under fire. Use of machine guns, the making of a barrage and other activities of real warfare are portrayed on the screen while an expert instructor explains everything shown over a movietone. The obvious advantages of this method of instruction have won many supporters for the plan. The navy promises to enter the new field of talking movie instruction in the near future and there are many who point out that certain college lectures might be worked out and given in this manner without need of a personal instructor.

The Child and the Screen

By Mrs. Howard S. Gans

President, Child Study Association of America

Mrs. Gans has served on the General Committee of the National Board of Review since 1914 *and was one of the original members of the Committee on Films for Young People out of which developed the present Better Films National Council. As President of the Child Study Association of America, an organization which for many years has been devoted to child welfare work, she was able to present at the Twentieth Anniversary Conference of the National Board a viewpoint gained through long experience with her subject.—Editor's Note.*

IT seems to me that my place on the program is to try to set forth what we conceive to be some fundamental principles on which we can base our selection of films for children and by which we can get a picture of the child for whom we are selecting these films. For this reason I have taken the subject of the child and the screen in a rather broad way.

The most interesting and the most important stories in the world have formed the substance of the world's best literature and drama, that which is most nearly universal in its appeal. It is not practicable to any great extent to separate children's films from films for others. Therefore, if we produce films that adequately set forth the great stories, we are doing the best we can for children.

Since 1915, the National Board of Review through the Better Films National Council has been carrying out a constructive program in furthering children's matinees and in helping those who are actively taking part in this movement by furnishing carefully selected lists of suitable films for the average child and in correlating efforts in widespread communities throughout the country. For many years, the Child Study Association has had a committee on motion pictures co-operating with the Better Films National Council in an endeavor to provide suitable programs for children's matinees.

Children have leisure and in the conditions of urban life spend no inconsiderable part of this in going to places of amusemet. The motion picture is one of the principal places available. City homes are contracted and often drab and dull. There is no room to play. There is little social life possible. There are books, of course, but books have never been the recourse of the majority of the people. Only a minority will find any literature besides sensational trash sufficiently interesting to hold their attention. Good literature, the stuff of good literature, will often not get across because the process of reading does not vitalize it sufficiently. There was a time when poetry and novels were read aloud in the family circle or other groups and so became more animated, but social conditions

Mrs. Howard S. Gans

do not permit this today. The theatre, on the other hand, is too expensive and too exclusive in respect to time. The only alternative is the motion picture.

What then is it that children most desire in pictures? They like to see things happen. They like action. They like to do things. But the restrictions of life in cities and in the present day mechanical age do not lend themselves notably to the satisfaction of these desires. Therefore, the real problem of the movies in

relation to the crowd is "How can this be supplied, not harmfully, but positively, beneficially?"

Everything is beneficial which gives a greater knowledge and understanding of real conditions. That is what expands and enriches personality. The principal difference between the same subject treated in good and bad literature is that in the latter it is falsified through a mist of sentimentality, of irrelevant motion.

The following incident is an instance of the kind of thing that can happen and should happen. It illustrates the significance of the honesty of real literature in relation to the honesty of the reader. A fourteen-year old girl came across Sudermann's "Song of Songs" in the library of her parents. She was attracted by it and asked her mother whether this was an immoral book. Her mother replied, "It is not an immoral book. It is, in fact, a very fine piece of literature, but it deals with the story of a woman who, according to our standards has led an immoral life." The girl read the book and was able intelligently and sympathetically to discuss the temptations to which the woman had been subjected and the extent to which she had resisted them, and it provided altogether a valuable experience.

It is not necessary to have things wholly virtuous, provided the story is so presented that the young person can get a sense of values out of it. For instance, stories with the very element of horror in them, if consistent, do not react unfavorably upon children. The experience caused may be an emotional catharsis.

The motion picture has the merit of expressing action by more actual presentation than the written word. It is more easily possible in the motion picture than in the novel to be interestingly real without debilitating sentimentality. Therefore, the motion picture is a most serious instrument for expanding the knowledge and adding to the culture of the young.

The most important point to consider when we ask, "Do the motion picture producers supply a demand, or does the public have to take what is given them?" is will the public accept honestly presented renditions of life? Will they accept the great stories, the records of great adventure, the interesting incidents of life set forth in the spirit of a great art that is without sentimental slush, or will they demand the falsifications? It is, of course, easier to write slushy scenarios than straight-forward ones. It is easier to get sentimental effects than real ones, but these difficulties are not insuperable.

The question of the possible demand that can be made upon the producers depends upon the possible acceptance by the audiences. There can be no doubt but that it would be better for children if from the start they became habituated to an honest view of life rather than to that presented by sentimental literature and sentimental movies. Everything that has beauty, truth, action, variety of experience, everything which makes for a larger acquaintance with man and with nature is profitable.

Pictures for children should not, therefore, essentially falsify life. It is better that fairy tales should be laid in fairyland than in gilded halls of vice and luxury. Heroic deeds, great adventures, successful action, should have their real conditions presented. Fiction should not violate fact but should illustrate it.

Educationally the motion picture has infinite possibilities. Much of the description in text books is utterly futile and cannot hold the attention. Illustrations are as a rule clearer than text but moving illustrations by means of the motion picture are more effective than still pictures. This is especially true for nature study in all its varieties. Geography and the study of foreign countries—their peoples, customs and products, can be portrayed in stories that will make them more real than they have ever been, even, in fact, more real to the student than to those who visit these countries, for the traveler often gets less distinct impressions from the whole than when some part is distinctly shown. This kind of picture carefully produced can be used as a means of universal understanding, to make children realize that other peoples may have different ways but that these have their peculiar reason for being and have the same meaning to the others as their own ways have for them.

The more children live active and full lives, the less they need the constant stimulus and distraction of fiction. Though it is certain that we should do all that is possible to improve the conditions of their ordinary daily living, there is no use quarreling with the present facts. Disapproval does not alter actual conditions. At present, children will seek distractions because they have more time than

(*Continued on page* 11)

The Super-Spectacle

THERE was a time when the screen's power impressed itself upon us through those films which showed great masses —armies and mobs—moving against a hugeness of background used to recreate historic battlefields, seething streets and temples, whole cities of the past. Through its power of panorama the scope of the screen was first made known. We recall some really magnificent things—*Antony and Cleopatra, Cabiria,* later *The Birth of a Nation* and—greatest of all—*Intolerance,* that stirring dream of humans oppressed that once Mr. Griffith had, too dim, too unseizable, too terrible and vast to emerge upon the screen except in exciting fragments. In *Intolerance* allegory first crept into pictures—the method long used by older arts to illuminate men's deeds by placing the shadow of symbolic action at their background. It was also the genesis of the morality film.

Since then, from time to time, when great sums of money have been available and the question has been what to do with them, some producer has said, "Let's make a spectacle! Let's pile everything into it—make it the biggest motion picture show on earth!" This show has invariably been aimed at the box-office, the idea having been to cram the picture so full of everything that everybody would be pleased with something in it, or at least stunned by all of it. The psychological weapon employed to accomplish this has been an avalanche of images dumped at the audience's head to paralyze its visual nerves. Such films have seldom had anything to do with art, have never approached the grand harmony—no matter how disordered and interrupted—that lay behind the divination and intent of *Intolerance,* artistically have never justified the means or the money spent on them. On the other hand it can be said that in such productions now and then have occurred sequences that have formed like sudden visions to overpower us with the stupendous range of the motion picture camera and made it possible for us to hope that some day a supreme artist of the magnitudes would use the screen for his imagination.

It is the weakness for the allegorical or morality theme, in the dreams of lesser minds, that has played hob with the spectacle film—the film that could be justified were it merely to show us grandiose pictures, as if it were a picture book that someone opened before eyes not asked to reason, like the eyes of children, but which jars us out of our child-interest when it proposes a story-plot that asks us to cerebrate as sensible people, and then throws us down by making us realize that we are too grown-up for such vaporings.

Mr. De Mille is fond, or used to be, of this expensive tomfoolery and showed it by *The Ten Commandments.* Yet in that part of the film which dealt with Pharaoh and his palaces, his horsemen and chariots pursuing the tribes of Moses down to the Red Sea, there were sequences where the movement was vast and authentic and the curtain rose again on that Pharaoh's time. In those sequences, and only in them, *The Ten Commandments* was artistically virtuous.

So it is with *Noah's Ark,* the latest, it would seem the most expensive, and in many ways the most prodigious of our film spectacles. There may be analogy between the Biblical flood and the recent war, they may both have been the act of an avenging God to cure man of his greed, cruelty and lust, "to teach him a lesson"—if so, it is a too complicated drama of anger for other than the wisest to be concerned about, in motion pictures or outside of them, and too many of the public think themselves wise enough these days to be very seriously interested in it. The feature of *Noah's Ark* which holds our interest when it arrives, and while we wait for other matters to go on, is the visualization of the coming of the waters upon the land. Then, whether characters drown or survive, whether the theme is proved true or not, or if it makes us better men or leaves us as we are, we do not care—the allegory, the moral or whatever it is, is submerged in the spectacle of the waters that flow, spout, descend and flow again as they have never done in a motion picture before. To say that the spectacle of this event, for even the most frivolous minded, is not at moments both convincing and terrifying in its realism, or super-

(*Continued on page* 15)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers who are looking beyond what the popular theatres have to offer.

SECRETARY

ALFRED B. KUTTNER

EDITORS

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
WILTON A. BARRETT

Piccadilly

Directed by .....E. A. Dupont
Photographed by .....Werner Brandes

The Cast

Mabel Greenfield .....Gilda Grey
Valentine Wilmot .....Jameson Thomas
Shosho .....Anna May Wong
Jim .....King Ho-Chang

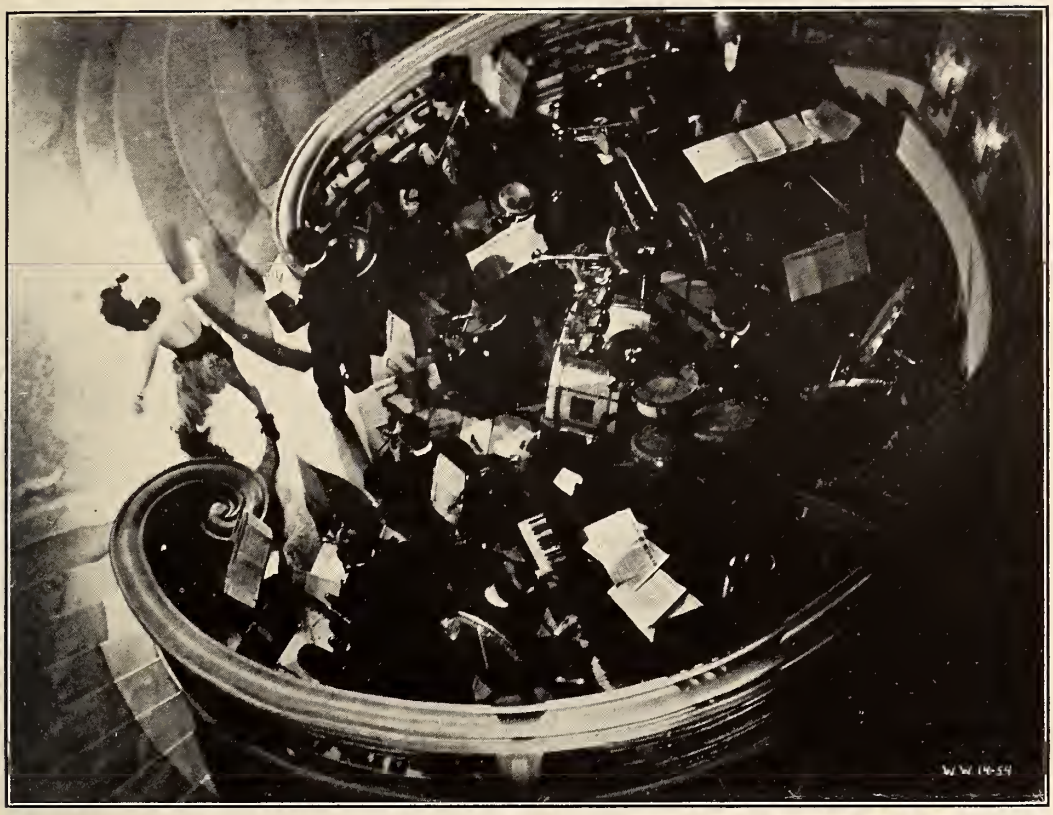
Original screen story by Arnold Bennett

THE first serious contender of our American product to reach these shores from English studios is *Piccadilly*. This picture has the double advantage of E. A. Dupont's direction and of the presence of Gilda Gray and Anna May Wong in the cast. Of them, with Dupont having *Variety* to his credit and two actresses of varied experience on the screen, something out of the ordinary was perhaps to be expected. Something out of the ordinary has resulted, for *Piccadilly* is the first film out of England that measures up, both artistically and dramatically, in production values to our best standards of quality in screen entertainment. And it is among the topnotch of imported films.

Arnold Bennett supplied the story. Mr. Bennett has not been put through any studio system. He thus approaches his material as a free writer. Building his story soundly around a variation of the triangle and partly borrowing his atmosphere from Burke's "Limehouse Nights" he succeeded in producing a workmanlike script. In its careful seizure of significant detail, and its insistence on logical motivation, the film which results is truly outstanding.

The leading attraction of the Piccadilly Restaurant is Mabel Greenfield a dancer (Gilda Gray) who is slipping away from her best form. When her partner is discharged for having troubled her with his attentions her waning power to hold her clientele becomes even more apparent. Her last performance has been annoyingly disturbed by an obstreperous guest who makes an undue fuss about a soiled plate. Valentine Wilmot the owner (Jameson Thomas) goes to the kitchen to investigate. A Chinese scullery maid with the divine spark of the dancer in her is performing on top of the table to the edification of the rest of the employees. The owner gives her a private trial and decides to feature her. The dancer, jealous, instinctively fears that she will lose the owner's love and when the former scullery maid becomes a success overnight in an exotic oriental dance, her dismay is complete. The owner becomes infatuated with Shosho the Chinese girl. A little later she is found murdered in her apartment in Limehouse, under circumstances that implicate the owner and the dancer. At the ensuing court investigation the girl's Chinese lover unexpectedly turns out to be the keystone of the mystery.

Silhouette Method in "Piccadilly"



Illustrating Dupont's Interesting Use of Camera Angles in "Piccadilly"

The introduction of the picture is cleverly contrived. Instead of a bald title stating the time and place we see various night shots of Piccadilly Circus and the name of the Piccadilly Restaurant is displayed through many and diverse printed and illuminated signs or on the sides of moving busses until we are made to feel that this restaurant is the hub of London's night life and the place of places to which to go. Almost imperceptibly we find ourselves in the club watching Mabel's dance with her partner at the height of their success.

Then we find Mabel dancing alone to the accompaniment of the incident of the soiled plate which distracts both her and the guests and spoils her act by robbing her of her poise. The gentleman who objects so strenuously to the soiled plate makes the most of a nice bit. He is an individual of porcine aspect, some Continental gourmand, so petty and self-important that he commits the unpardonable breach of creating a disturbance while an artist is performing. All through these sequences the action is life-like and the atmosphere of a fashionable night-club splendidly adduced through Mr. Dupont's admirable direction and original use of the camera.

Valentine Wilmot, the owner of the restaurant, finding that Mabel can no longer hold his patrons and intrigued by the possibilities of Shosho, goes to the Chinese quarter in Limehouse in order to select a Chinese costume. There he meets Jim (King Ho-Chang) Shosho's enigmatic friend.

Shosho intuitively sensing Valentine's infatuation, changes subtly from a humble scullery maid to an imperious woman who realizes her power. There follows an excellent scene in a kind of low-life "Piccadilly" in the Limehouse district. A negro and a white woman are separated for dancing together by the highly moral proprietor who evidently has strong views about miscegenation. Shosho and Valentine may not see the analogy but the incident invites the spectator to do so. It is a good example of the camera doing its own talking.

The ambiguity about Shosho's death which sets up the inquiry about who killed cock robin in the ensuing court scene is rather tricky, and for a moment the transition of action for which we are not prepared tends to confuse us and break the suspense. But the interest is quickly renewed in a scene

where the court procedure is presented with a care seldom lavished on this sort of thing in films. It also produces the most magnificent acting in the whole picture when Jim, Shosho's Chinese lover, confesses just before his self-inflicted death that he killed Shosho in a fit of jealousy after Mabel left. This Jim does a priceless piece of work here. If it is true that he is really the proprietor of a Chinese shop in the London slums then there is something in the theory that pantomimic ability is the gift of the gods in spite of the claims of directors that screen actors are puppets who can be made to do anything they are told.

Aside from that outstanding performance one of the most revealing things about this picture is the re-discovery of Gilda Gray and of Anna May Wong. Miss Gray has been so thoroughly tagged and pigeon-holed on the American screen as a "nothing but" shimmy exponent that nobody ever thought of her as an actress. Here her very real abilities at last have found an opportunity. Her portrait of the cabaret dancer is done with finesse and a fine intuition. The case of Anna May Wong is slightly different. Since her first real opportunity in *The Thief of Bagdad* nobody of any judgment at all could doubt her talent. Yet she continued to be shelved except for small parts and no adequate role was ever created for her. It is rather an irony that two such actresses whose talents were first at the disposal of directors in this country should have found the opportunity in an English studio of creating the parts for which recognition is chiefly due them.

Mr. Dupont deserves great credit for his direction of *Piccadilly,* even though he displays at times a tendency to jazz his camera too much, keeping it on the move constantly even when it should be at rest. Camera acrobatics are no magic formula for picture perfection. But Mr. Dupont's excess here is after all pardonable because it is an error on the right side. Before the days of camera mobility so eagerly popularized by *Variety* and *The Last Moment,* pictures were on the point of going dead, cinematically speaking, because directors were in the habit of merely shifting the scene where they should have shifted the camera. Through Mr. Dupont's technique a mobility is achieved which often gives us angles of perception outside of the usual way in which we see things, which adds freshness and interest to the cinema pattern that he spreads on the screen. *Piccadilly* is thus invariably at once fluid and sharp, in the impression of characters and situations it makes. It is distinctly of the cinema.

Its closing shots should not go without remark. A passerby stops to buy a paper in which he casually reads the headline pertaining to Shosho's inglorious and sordid death. As he turns to the racing news to find whether he has won a bet, a line of down-and-outers passes before the camera, bearing placards advertising the name of the latest show in town. Its name is "Life Goes On". A touch of satire referring to a pathos that makes this film propound a question beyond the mere incidents of its story. Thus its ending is on the note of intelligence that informs the whole production.

Produced by the British International Studios; Distributed by World Wide Pictures, Inc.

Krassin

Cameraman on board "Krassin",
Wilhelm Bluvstein
Cameraman on board "Malyghim",
Ignati Valentey
Cameraman on board "Perseus",
Eugene Bogorov

THE camera record of the exploits of the Russian ice-breaker "Krassin" in searching for the survivors of Nobile's North Pole expedition, is a superb newsreel of a thrilling and notable exploit. The picture tells the story as the camera saw it and becomes the graphic supplement to the written record of the eye witnesses who were part of that exploit. Once more the camera has done what only the camera can do.

The picture starts with views of Nobile and his crew manoeuvering their dirigible and giving the spectator some idea of the first brilliant successes of the expedition. Then follows the sudden dramatic disappearance of the airship in an unchartered wilderness of ice. This is shown by an animated map which helps to give some idea of the problem with which the "Krassin" was confronted.

Then follow various scenes showing the "Krassin" being conditioned, the loading operations, the hoisting of aeroplanes aboard her deck. Under the eyes of the camera the "Krassin" becomes an animated, intelligized thing preparing to engage in a struggle with a stubborn, formidable inertia, a passive form

of resistance against which must be matched navigating skill, a hull cunningly designed to crunch through or partly slide over large masses of ice, and strength measured in terms of steam pressure and propellor drive.

On she plows, sometimes running into bits of open water, sometimes meeting animal life in the form of birds and seals and polar bears, sometimes apparently hopelessly paralyzed by the desolate and relentless ice. And again she has to rest. Like a huge, pre-historic amphibian she has to come back to land for coal, for provisions, for repairs, while her sister ship, the "Malyghim," takes up her task.

We see her unloading her aeroplanes on the ice, and watch them taking off for reconnoitering flights. It is very interesting to see that aeroplanes are evidently quite practical for arctic work, with lots of level ice for taking off and for landing.

Not all the actualities of the eventual rescue are shown. Apparently the camera was not always functioning or perhaps at times the supply of film ran short. We do not see the ultimate drama of the lost men on the ice floe being sighted and signalled to, nor the joy or frenzy of their response. But we see them a little later maimed or frozen, tenderly cared for, see some of them walking the decks again. The task of the "Krassin" has been accomplished and the picture ends with her return to civilization.

Krassin is part newsreel, part super-newsreel where actualities are combined to give life itself a second existence in a world of artistic unity and significance. In this respect *Krassin,* though on not quite so high a plane, resembles *Potemkin.* In *Potemkin* the fictional re-creation of an actual event was brought about by the use of a newsreel method which cut clear across the problem of creating an aesthetic illusion by making you feel that the events, had you seen them in the first place as an objective, all-seeing observer (the camera eye), would have given you aesthetic pleasure. In *Krassin,* the recording camera, which is not concerned in re-creating the event but simply in preserving it, discovers the aesthetic quality in the event beyond its news quality.

This is due to the fact that the cameraman was acting as a selective artist, not as an emotional participant of the "Krassin's" heroic quest—(he was not an aesthete rescuer saying, "This expedition is a beautiful enterprise!"). We refer particularly to the fascinating camera studies of the ship. The cameraman did not simply photograph the ship in motion or at rest according to the exigencies of the expedition. He kept his camera moving, trying to capture the visual delights of the ship. He photographed her in light or in shadow, in contrast to the white expanse of ice or the black waters swirling about her. By using his camera from every angle he revealed the ship in many more visual aspects than the naive human eye, which is always prone to see conventionally, could have discovered by itself. The ship transcends its realistic character of a mere ship and becomes an abstract mass capable of arousing aesthetic sensations in the spectator. Something of the same effect was achieved in the first two reels of *The Salvation Hunters* where the dredge, which most people would dismiss as an ugly object, became a thing of beauty through the perspicacity of the camera.

To some, of course, *Krassin* will appeal merely as a stirring exploit to be enjoyed like any book of adventure. Others not inclined to aesthetic appreciation may complain of over-emphasis and re-iteration in this film—them the camera has not taught to see more than the eye can see. But we venture to make the point, often stressed before in these columns, that the camera *does* see more than the eye, just as the painter sees more detail than the average person and puts it on his canvas for us to discover with our slower perceptions, and as the musician hears more sensitively and creates a subtlety of sound harmonies which the average person cannot always appreciate at the first hearing. For that reason the appreciation of pictures must for most of us be to some extent an acquired function. It is the task of motion picture criticism to facilitate that appreciation.

Produced by Sovkino. Distributed by Amkino.

(*Continued from page* 6)

interesting occupations. They must live to a large extent vicariously and through fantasy. The best we can demand is that this vicarious fantasy life should not contradict the real one, but should enhance and develop it. If that is accomplished, art is both a pastime and a discipline. If that is not accomplished, art is only a pastime and a harmful influence.

Bondage

Directed by .....*Richard Eichberg*
Photographed .....*Heinrich Gartner*

The Cast

Helena .....*Mona Maris*
Nikita .....*Heinrich George*
Countess Danischeff ....*Maria Reisenhofer*
Count Theodore .....*Harry Halm*
Prince Leopol .....*Oscar Homolka*
Princess Sonia .....*Jutta Jol*

Based on the play "The Danischeffs" by Pierre Newsky.

BONDAGE is an Ufa version of Russian peasant life, chiefly remarkable for its acting and for some fine photography. The theme is the unhappy lot of the Russian serfs before their liberation.

Count Theodore, son of the imperious Countess Danischeff, has fallen in love with Helena, a beautiful young serf attached to the Danischeff household. When the Countess hears of this she "arranges" a marriage for her son with Princess Sonia, daughter of the impecunious Governor of the Province. She makes sure that Helena will make no trouble by offering her to any serf on her estate who will marry her.

One gathers that the Countess is by way of being a tyrant with a strong penchant for arranging marriages according to her ideas of fitness. She has just ordered Nikita, another serf, to marry a woefully unattractive wench, in order to cure him of his drunkenness apparently not having considered that such a repellant spouse might make him take to drink even more. The good Nikita crosses himself in horror but the will of the Countess must be done. Nikita sees a way out by offering to marry Helena and promptly does so. He lives with her in name only, however, in order to protect Helena for Theodore who, as we saw at the beginning of the picture, had saved Nikita from a bear's deadly embrace. Count Theodore breaks his engagement with Princess Sonia when he hears what his mother has done, is cashiered from the army for having insulted the Governor and returns home to wreak vengeance upon the apparently ungrateful Nikita. There he learns the truth.

From the story point of view *Bondage* is perhaps somewhat overloaded with literary pathos and didactic altruism in the manner of Tolstoy. The ruthlessness of the Countess in particular is overdrawn. In the treatment we find a mixture of realism and sentimentalism, making the whole seem like a piece of fiction laid in Russia where such things can or could be, rather than a veracious transcript of life such as we find in Russian naturalistic pictures.

The acting, however, within the limitations set by the style of the story is unusually fine. This is especially true of the performance of Heinrich George in the part of Nikita. He depicts the serf with bold strong strokes, a happy drunken child of the soil who rises to do a fine thing in his groping, inarticulate way. He is not without a touch of Jannings' bonhommie. Mona Maris, with her pale, delicate beauty, seems a bit refined for a serf but her work in the part is appealing. Oscar Homolka gives a good account of himself as a governor of the Old Regime and Maria Reisenhofer plays competently opposite him as the inexorable Countess.

The photoplay is well adapted to the general style of the picture which abounds in outdoor scenes and many solid sets. The costumes undoubtedly enhance the pictorial appeal of the picture especially in the wedding scene. The horizon line shots with Nikita and his plough silhouetted against the sky or Helena coming to bring him his mid-day repast with springy elastic steps emphasize the kinship between serf and soil.

Produced and distributed by Ufa Films, Inc.

An Outdoor Scene in "Bondage"

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

Extra! Extra!

"SEE and Hear Mrs. James A. Craig, of Jacksonville, Addressing the Members of the National Board of Review in their Convention in New York City, Through the Marvelous Vitaphone."

The above announcement was carried not long ago in a Jacksonville paper and drew quite an audience, as it was the first time a citizen of Jacksonville was heard over the Vitaphone. They greeted the novelty with great enthusiasm. Mrs. Craig is the President of the Jacksonville Better Films Committee. The courtesy of the Warner Brothers Pictures in taking this talking act was much appreciated and enjoyed by all the delegates at the time of the convention and from all reports the appreciation and enjoyment is not diminishing as time goes on but is reaching a wider circle.

MRS. JOHN VRUWINK, from whom we have had in the past helpful information on motion picture activity, especially for young people, sends us this word of her present motion picture work. "The Women's University Club, the Los Angeles Branch of the American Association of University Women is reviewing films. We give one program a month at the University Club to the subject of motion pictures. Our mimeographed picture reviews are mailed to the members, seven hundred and fifty. The luncheons are well attended and the programs have been interesting. I think most people are interested in motion pictures and especially in the children's angle." These reviews are listed under the heading Current Releases reviewed by the Motion Picture Committee of the Women's University Club of Los Angeles from the point of view of their suitability as entertainment for children, and they classify pictures for ages 6-12, 12-16. Mrs. Vruwink is Chairman of the Committee and has done much by her pioneer interest in this field to interest the Club in motion pictures.

THE members of the Better Films Council of Waterbury (Conn.) are not only doing much to gain patronage for the selected pictures as they come to the city's theatres but they are interesting the theatres in bringing for exhibition especially worth while pictures which might otherwise not be shown in the city. The latest picture to be sponsored by the Council was *Simba* which was shown in the Strand Theatre on March 21 to 23. Mrs. Frederick T. Hoadley, chairman of the Better Films Council has sent us a report which gives an idea of the efforts which were expended in making the *Simba* showing the success it was. She says "We certainly did gain the interest and cooperation of the schools. The Library consented to display a poster made by an art student in one of the high schools. And after three bombardments the Scouts Council "fell in line" and gave excellent cooperation; the Director wrote a long and enthusiastic letter which he had mimeographed and mailed to some seventy Scout leaders and workers in the city and environs. He also attended the monthly meeting of the Council last week and brought considerable interest and enthusiasm to the matters in hand. He made an appeal to interest more men in the movement."

The Council held its annual election at a recent meeting. Mrs. Hoadley will continue her able services as chairman, Mrs. Frank Nack was elected secretary and Mrs. Anson Miner was elected treasurer. The meeting was presided over by Mrs. Hoadley, and a report given of the junior matinee held at Carroll Theatre under the auspices of the Council and with the cooperation of the management at which *Moran of the Marines* was shown with added features. A discussion of better films was held by the members of the Exceptional Photoplays Committee and plans to have theatre managers become more interested in this phase of their work were made. Continued support has been promised the Council in its activity by the leading theatres of the city.

THE Oneonta (N. Y.) Motion Picture Study Club held its annual election recently. When Mrs. Ray D. Champlin, the corresponding secretary, reported the names and affiliations of the new officers it seemed a certain prediction of success for the coming year. Mrs. W. O. Brannaman, the retiring president could not serve again but the excellent work which she has done will undoubtedly be carried forward. The officers are, with their representation on the club, as follows: Mrs. Frank Shutts, President, Board of Education, Committee on Motion Pictures, N. Y. State Home Bureau; Mrs. George Slade, Secretary, Episcopal Church; Mrs. F. M. H. Jackson, Vice President, D. A. R.; Dr. LeRoy Weller, Treasurer, Faculty Hartwick College; Mrs. Ray D. Champlin, Corresponding Secretary, Child Conservation League.

Mrs. Brannaman has expressed great satisfaction that Mrs. Shutts has accepted the presidency. She says of her, "She is an exceedingly busy woman but very much interested and very capable." "Through the efforts of the Motion Picture Study Club," writes Mrs. Champlin, "several organizations have sent letters to the Schine Enterprises, controlling the local theatres, expressing appreciation of the efforts of Mr. Charles Rose, theatre manager, in his efforts to secure better films for the Oneonta Theatres. We hope Mr. Rose will remain in Oneonta for he has done his best to cooperate."

THE Better Films Committee of Rockville Centre (N. Y.) held its regular monthly meeting on March 14th. It was the pleasure of the editor of this department to visit them and bring them some words of greeting from the National Board. Mrs. Bradley Myers who has been especially successful in her presidency of the Committee presided. Reports which were given by the various Chairmen showed a keen interest and a determination to carry forward the work outlined. The project receiving special attention now is the Saturday matinee and the Committee has succeeded in gaining the interest of the theatre exhibitor and the many groups in the community whose aid and cooperation would be necessary in making these Saturday performances for young people the success they wish them to be.

WE are pleased to record an especial recognition which has come to one of our members, Mrs. David D. Koger, Chairman of the Better Films Council of Miami (Fla.). "Mrs. Koger has recently been honored by an appointment to the Editors' Council of the International Poetry Magazine of which Alexander DeAryan is editor-in-chief. It is published by the International Writers League and is widely known in Europe. Mrs. Koger, who is a member of the League of American Pen Women, will have an article on Better Films in the next issue of the magazine which the editor asked her to write and a poem on Miami." We believe that the cause of better films is indeed forwarded when people with so many interests as Mrs. Koger devote their time and talents to it.

THE Chairmen of Motion Pictures of the various clubs of the Montgomery County (Maryland) Federation of Women's Clubs have been holding their monthly meetings in the offices of Mrs. Harriet Hawley Locher, Director of the Department of Public Service and Education of the Stanley Theatres in Washington, D. C. Mrs. Mina Church Brann is the Chairman of Motion Pictures for the Montgomery County Federation and it was through arrangements made by her that this pleasant place was made available to the members for these get-together conferences. Mrs. Brann has done much to arouse interest in better films in the clubs of her district and by her enthusiasm and activity she maintains this interest. At one of these meetings which are held for the purpose of discussing the many phases of the motion picture and to thus profit by the experience of others, Mrs. Locher presented some of the salient points in the use of the educational motion pictures for supplementing the many club activities. To demonstrate her statements, a film from the United States Forest Service, *The Forest and Health* was shown, by means of a portable projector such as would be suitable for club use. At the March meeting Mrs. Brann led the discussion on the "Reaction of Children to Motion Pictures," after which problems confronting the various chairmen were presented. We are very glad to have Mrs. Brann an interested reader and user of our NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW MAGAZINE.

ONE of the latest recruits in the field of the Little Theatre idea in the cinema is the Newark (N. J.) Motion Picture Guild. The Little Theatre of this Guild, now under construction, will be most unique, the facade of the building being a replica of a Moorish tower while the interior will be decorated in an Arabesque motif. There will be an art gallery for the works of artists residing in Newark. Only silent films will be shown and the future programs are quite complete with exceptional pictures, both American and foreign. The second invitational Little Theatre night was held on March the twenty-first at which time the National Board of Review's chronological history of the motion picture *The March of the Movies* was received with much enthusiasm. This compilation has been brought up-to-date and proves most interesting and educational to all audiences. Mr. Stuart Whitmarsh, the manager of the Guild, is endeavoring to make this a community project of outstanding success and the reports are most favorable. Among the members of the advisory board are Mrs. C. O. Padelford, Chairman, Motion Picture Committee, N. J. State Federation of Women's Clubs; Mrs. J. A. Granberry, Chairman, Motion Picture Committee of The Contemporary Club of Newark and Mrs. L. A. McIntire, N. J. State Chairman of Better Films, D. A. R.

THIS is the time of the year to have a report from Garden City so we are glad to publish the following paragraph of accomplishment from a letter written by Mrs. Charles A. Hammann, Chairman of the Garden City (N. Y.) Better Films Committee. "We have obtained the cooperation of the management of the Mineola Theatre for special programs for children as well as adults on Friday of each week. Last week we had *Evangeline* as the feature with a short reel *A Day with John Burroughs* and a delightful musical program. This Friday we have *A Tale of Two Cities, Through Darkest Africa* and a Chaplin comedy. The old law of supply and demand however, is applicable to pictures as well as to other fields of enterprise, so we shall only be able to have these programs as long as there is a demand for them. At any rate, it is a step in the right direction if we can get the support of the community."

THE formation of a Better Films Committee has been accomplished in Thomasville, Georgia. The organization grew out of a suggestion made by Mrs. John Watt to the Ladies' Study Class that the citizens and managers of the local theatres cooperate to have a weekly film especially suitable for children. This Committee was able to get so quickly under way after enthusiasm was aroused in the community through the very helpful advice given by Mrs. Piercy Chestney, President of the Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee. Mrs. Watt had formerly lived in Macon and her appeal to Mrs. Chestney was met with prompt and helpful suggestions. We at the National Board are very glad to be put in touch with this new committee and we wish to give them aid and encouragement in their new work.

(*Continued from page* 7)

realism, would be to give false evidence. Here the sheer picture triumphs, the imagination is touched and the dark Ark stirring its huge bulk, as the waters lift it from its bed, is believable and real. To write technically of this film would require a paper on hydraulics; tons of actual water have been confined and loosed in such quantities as to sweep whole masses of people down hillsides, through gully and vale. Here it would seem, was a worthy attempt to create illusion by resorting to actuality itself, by stepping outside the studio and doing the trick, full-size, on the landscape itself.

So the flood in *Noah's Ark* becomes the picture. The point is, such episodes can stand by themselves on the screen and people will pay to see them. Why not in the future do things like this just for the spectacle alone without the burden of the moralizing, the tedium of intricate analogy. If we must put our messages into films, let them come as expensively as may be wished, in the silent or in the talkie, from an exploration of those secret springs in mankind that humanly reveal our rancours and humors. The other way the screen can attain authenticity of spectacle; only in this can it achieve the drama of what really causes us to cry or laugh, to be bad or good—in other words, truly move us.

Pictures for "Days" and "Weeks"

BETTER Films groups will find many opportune days during the month of May to tie-up their activities with special occasions and observances. A few picture suggestions are given below but if more complete lists for these and other special days are desired they may be had from the National Board of Review.

Child Health Day—May 1st

Drinking Health—2 reels. An especial appeal for care in drinking water during the summer months. Y. M. C. A. Motion Picture Bureau, 120 West 41st Street, N. Y. C.

A Fair Day—1 reel. Visit of the Golucky family to the county fair where they see a Red Cross clown give instructions in Health Habits for children. Edited Pictures System, Inc., 71 West 23rd Street, New York City.

The Hungry Dragon—1 reel. Fairy story with puppets as actors in which the Hungry Dragon is portrayed as tuberculosis. Carlyle Ellis, 130 West 46th Street, New York City.

A catalogue may be procured free of charge from the National Health Council, 370 7th Avenue, New York City, containing a wide selection of child welfare and health films.

Music Week—May 5th-11th

Life of Beethoven—7 reels. A well told life story of the great German musician showing his struggles and triumphs. There is warmth and tenderness in this picture which should commend it to all admirers of Beethoven. Ufa Pictures, 1540 Broadway, New York City.

Schubert's Songs—1 reel. A musical number of the well-known songs of this famous composer. Paramount Famous-Lasky Corp., 1501 Broadway, New York City.

Mother's Day—May 12th

Love's Crucifixion—8 reels. Mother love drama. A mother is separated from her young son during the World War but after many tribulations they are united. World Wide Pictures, Inc., 130 West 46th Street, N. Y. C.

The Mother—2 reels. This picture was inspired by the painting of Sir John Lavery, it possesses a human interest and heart appeal that makes it most attractive. H. S. Brown, 729 7th Avenue, New York City.

Mother Machree—7 reels. Irish mother melodrama with a World War story woven in. Fox Films, Inc., 850 Tenth Ave., N. Y. C.

Memorial Day—May 30th

The Flying Fleet—11 reels. An aviation picture made with the co-operation of the Navy. Wonderful flying sequences. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corp., 1560 Broadway, New York City.

The Heart of Robert E. Lee—2 reels. The story of General Lee's decision to surrender to General Grant told in color. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corp., 1560 Broadway, New York City.

Marching On—2 reels. A Fox movietone featuring Chick Sales in his well-known interpretation of the reminiscing old Civil War veteran. Fox Films, Inc., 850 10th Avenue, New York City.

Our Flag—1 reel. Illustrating the correct salute to the flag, the text of the Oath of Allegiance and ending with a close-up of the D. A. R. insignia. Carlyle Ellis, 130 West 46th Street, N. Y. C. (This reel is for sale only at the above mentioned distributor and better films groups would find it quite useful for their various programs during the year.)

Among the subject film lists available for year-around tie-ups of better films activities are Art, Better Homes, Domestic Science, Education, English Literature, French Literature, Gardening and Forestry, Religion and many others. Their price is five cents each.

Bondage

(*See page* 12)

For family audience including young people.

Krassin

(*See page* 10)

For family audience including children.

Piccadilly

(*See page* 8)

For the mature audience.

Noah's Ark

(*See page* 7)

For family audience including young people.

Produced and distributed by Warner Brothers.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

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EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

The Bridge of San Luis Rey

Directed by.....*Charles Brabin*
Featuring.....*Lily Damita*

Novel by Thornton Wilder

THE Pulitzer prize-winning novel of Thornton Wilder seems very unlikely motion picture material but it has been fairly faithfully transferred to the screen. Although certain changes were necessary to link more closely the lives of the characters, forming the subjects of nearly separate narratives in the book, still the picture follows the book more accurately than is often the case. The Bridge of San Luis Rey had stood for years near the Cathedral of Lima until it had become a symbol to the people. When the bridge falls there are five people killed; a haughty disillusioned dame and her ward, a young convent girl; a youth made unhappy through love; a dancer's small son and her cast-off dancing teacher. The picture cleverly traces the lives of these five people showing how they are interwoven and bringing them together on the bridge at the fatal moment of the fall. The settings and the photography are quite worthy of the story.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

Close Harmony

Directed by.....*John Cromwell*
Featuring.....*Charles Rogers*, *Nancy Carroll*

Original screen story by Elsie Janis and Gene Markey

ROMANCE, drama, comedy and music are the blended parts of *Close Harmony*. A popular vaudeville star helps a young man, in whom she is interested, to get bookings for his jazz band at her theatre. Because of professional jealousy the course of true love does not run smoothly. The star using her power over men, turns a neat trick in order to further the cause of the jazz orchestra. She nearly loses the boy's love through his jealousy but when he understands her ruse, all is forgiven. An excellent picture with Elsie Janis of stage fame as co-author and old favorites of vaudeville doing their specialties.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—7 reels)

The Duke Steps Out

Directed by.....*James Cruze*
Featuring.....*William Haines*
Saturday Evening Post Story by Lucian Cary

NOW that it has been established by illustrious precedent that all pugilists are learned gentleman we need not be surprised to find one who, having already been to col-

lege, makes up his mind to go all over again just to be near the girl with whom he has fallen in love. William Haines is this impetuous lad and he manages to thrive on the girl's preliminary rebuffs at the same time driving his trainer and his sparring partner to the verge of insanity by his disregard of all training rules. His identity is finally learned by the enterprising reporteress of the college paper and the girl, who has meanwhile come to love him, is misled by the trainer into thinking that he is in love with a noted actress. But it makes all the difference whether you win your fight and our hero does.

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—8 reels)

The Freckled Rascal

Directed by ..... *Louis King*
Featuring ..... *Buzz Barton*
Original screen story by Frank Howard Clark

BUZZ BARTON continues his picaresque adventures with his old pal. Their wanderings bring them to a small Western town where a gang have gotten control of the water supply which they want to sell at an exorbitant price. Buzz and his pal get busy and combine with the young editor of the local paper to circumvent the gang. They manage to turn on the water and fight off the gang, Buzz being particularly effective with his sling shot. Buzz acts in his usual ingratiating way and in the end rides off again with his old pal to seek fresh adventures.

For family audience including children.

(RKO—6 reels)

His Captive Woman

Directed by ..... *George Fitzmaurice*
Featuring ..... *Milton Sills*, *Dorothy Mackaill*
Story "Changeling" by Donn Byrne

A DRAMATIC story with a romantic background. A dancer becomes involved in an affair with a man and kills him. She escapes to the South Sea Islands on the yacht of a wealthy admirer where she becomes very popular with the natives. In the meantime the police have located her and an officer is sent to bring her back. This man is chosen because of his record of doing a job conscientiously and not bothering with women. All would have been well if the ship on which they were returning had not been wrecked and the two cast on a desert island. Thrown into daily contact and forced to rely upon each other, the man soon falls in love with the girl and she in turn awakens to the realization of the way she had been living and her outlook on life is changed. With no hope of rescue they finally take marriage vows alone on this beautiful desert island. One day a steamer is sighted and the man is torn between his duty to signal the boat in order to take the girl back and his longing to remain with her on the island. It is she who decides and they are brought back to civilization. At the trial things seem to be going against her and she is finally found guilty of murder. The judge however, aware of the change in the girl's character, pronounces sentence on her accordingly. The story is interesting and the natural scenes on the island are very beautiful.

For the mature audience.

(First National—8 reels)

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*The Iron Mask

Directed by ..... *Allan Dwan*
Featuring ..... *Douglas Fairbanks*
Based on "The Three Musketeers" and "The Man in the Iron Mask" by Alexander Dumas

ONCE more D'Artagnan calls upon his three boon companions and incomparable swordsmen, Athos, Porthos and Aramis, to help him in some weighty business of state and once more he fashions a rollicking piece of screen entertainment. This time he measures wits with no one less than Cardinal Richelieu who having found out that Louis the Thirteenth's wife has given birth to twins, wants the last born to disappear for reasons of state. The rightful heir destined to become Louis the Fourteenth is in turn captured and his identity concealed behind the mysterious figure of the Man with the Iron Mask. D'Artagnan becoming aware of the deceit, affects the rescue of the prince with the help of his three companions in arms. The picture is beautifully mounted and Mr. Fairbanks acts with undiminished dash.

For family audience including children.

(United Artists—11 reels)

The Lawless Legion

Directed by .....*Harry J. Brown*
Featuring .....*Ken Maynard*
Original screen story by Bennett Collins

ROMANCE and drama are again combined in a Ken Maynard western. A young man is chosen to drive a large herd of cattle through a territory infested with rustlers. He is drugged and while under this influence the cattle are stolen. Later, posing as a cattle buyer, he goes to the place where the rustlers have their hangout and nearly loses his life when he is recognized. He escapes through the help of his beautiful and intelligent horse. With his name cleared, the cattle returned and the rustlers caught, he marries the girl he loves. The scenery is very beautiful and the picture holds the interest.

For family audience including children.

(First National—6 reels)

*The Letter

Directed by.....*Jean de Limur*
Featuring.....*Jeanne Eagels*
Play by Somerset Maugham

ONE of the most successful transcriptions of a stage play to the screen yet accomplished through the medium of the talkies. The picture follows the Maugham play quite faithfully in plot but uses the freedom of the camera wherever necessary in order to introduce more variety of scenes. The story concerns a woman who has murdered her faithless lover but succeeds in making the jury and her husband believe that she is innocent. After her acquittal she lets her husband know that she really killed the man. The creation of atmospheric scenes in the Far East where the action of the story takes place also greatly adds to the enjoyment of the picture. The role of Leslie Crosbie provides an acting triumph for Miss Eagels.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—7 reels)

NOTE.—This picture to come before Exceptional Photoplays Committee, longer review to follow.

Love and the Devil

Directed by .....*Alexander Korda*
Featuring .....*Milton Sills*, *Maria Corda*
Original screen story by Joseph Lazslo and Leo Birinsky

THE romance of an English nobleman and an Italian opera singer. The Englishman falls in love with the beautiful prima donna, they are married and he takes her to England. Although she loves him, she pines for sunny Venice and the plaudits of her public. They return to Venice and she becomes intrigued in an affair with a former lover who is a member of the opera company. Her maid makes it possible for him to come to the wife's room and there her husband finds them. Not waiting to learn the truth the husband denounces his wife but later after many trials the two are unexpectedly reunited. This highly emotional rôle is well suited to the lovely Hungarian actress, Maria Corda, who played the Helen of Troy part in the picture of that name.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

Nothing But the Truth

Directed by.....*Victor Schertzinger*
Featuring .....*Richard Dix*
Play by James Montgomery

THE first Richard Dix talking picture is an entertaining farce-comedy. A young broker makes a wager with his business partners that he will tell the truth on every question put to him for twenty-four hours. He finds it is not always the easiest thing to do but he persists even when it gets himself and others into difficulties. Many times in the course of the twenty-four hours a white lie would have relieved an embarrassing situation, but the truth must be told. He wins the bet and the girl he loves.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—8 reels)

The Pagan

Directed by.....*W. S. Van Dyke*
Featuring .....*Ramon Novarro*
Story by John Russell

A ROMANCE of the South Seas. A young and handsome native who idles his time away singing romantic songs, falls in love with a native girl who has been adopted by a white trader. When she leaves the island he gives up his idle ways and starts keeping store to become worthy of her. The girl returns with

the trader and is about to be forced to marry him when the young native hearing of this uses his own tactics and kidnaping the girl carries her off to his mountain home. The trader comes and takes her back to the boat but she is again rescued by her native lover and together they make their escape. Ramon Novarro's singing adds greatly to the picture.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

*Seven Footprints to Satan

Directed by ..... *Benjamin Christensen*
Featuring ..... *Creighton Hale*, *Thelma Todd*
Novel by A. Merritt

ONE of those lavish and intricate mystery pictures which defies short analysis. But it will certainly give the spectator a run for his money, as the saying goes, and is likely to leave him breathless and thrilled. A rather naive young man with a bookish penchant for adventure finds himself in the toils of a diabolical gentleman who apparently has autocratic and almost super-human power over his fellow men. Mysterious panels, gorillas, shadows out of nowhere make life decidedly thrilling for the hero and the heroine, though, of course, they come out all right in the end and the diabolical gentleman proves not to be so formidable after all.

For family audience including young people.
(First National—6 reels)

Sonny Boy

Directed by ..... *Archie Mayo*
Featuring ..... *Davey Lee*, *Edward Everett Horton*, *Betty Bronson*
Original screen story by Leon Zuardo

A COMEDY-DRAMA of domestic difficulties. Threatened with having her child taken away from her by her husband, Sonny Boy's mother sends for her sister to help her. The sister sneaks the child out of the house and hides with him in the apartment of her brother-in-law's lawyer, whom she believes to be out of town. The lawyer comes home however, but not before his mother and father who have arrived unexpectedly for a visit. It is needless to say that complications follow but they finally end in a reconciliation between Sonny Boy's father and mother, and a no less happy ending for the sister and the lawyer. The acting of Davey Lee, the very youthful star of *The Singing Fool,* is excellent.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—7 reels)

Speakeasy

Directed by ..... *Benjamin Stoloff*
Featuring ..... *Paul Page*, *Lola Lane*
Play by Edward Knoblock and George Rosener

ALL-TALKING picture of a clever newspaper girl who has an assignment to get a story from a prize fighter. He refuses to see her and gives his none too flattering opinion of newspaper women in general. She goes to a speakeasy, which is his hangout, and forces her way in. He refuses to make a statement so she concocts a story in which she states that he intends a return fight with his opponent. Through her he learns that his manager is double crossing him. He admires her pluck and decides to stage a comeback, which he does, winning glory but better still winning the girl's love. The picture which was taken in New York City presents many of the unique sights and sounds of the busy metropolitan life.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—6 reels)

Spite Marriage

Directed by ..... *Edward Sedgwick*
Featuring ..... *Buster Keaton*
Original screen story by Lew Lipton

THE part of a love-lorn pants presser serves Buster Keaton in his latest comedy-drama. There are amusing disguises, some thrilling moments and the star's usual mystifying immobility of expression but as a whole the picture is not up to Keaton's standard, especially as entertainment to be enjoyed by children. Jilted by the leading man to whom she has been engaged, the leading lady of a stock company marries a worshipping pants presser out of spite and leaves him the morning after the wedding. A number of adventures befall him before he is picked up at sea by a private yacht on which the girl is cruising. After many strange happenings he saves

his wife's life and they discover that they are in love.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels

Square Shoulders

Directed by.....*E. Mason Hopper*
Featuring.....*Louis Wolheim*, *Junior Coughlan*
Original screen story by Peggy Pryor and George Drumgold

A SINCERE little story of a young waif who is befriended by a rough and ready character, named "Slag" who teaches him life's ways as he knows them and protects him when necessary. "Slag" is really the boy's father but never betrays his paternal relation and takes his secret to the grave when he meets a violent death, comforted by the thought that he has at least done something for his son.

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—6 reels)

Strong Boy

Directed by.....*John Ford*
Featuring.....*Victor McLaglen*
Original screen story by Frederick H. Brennan

VICTOR McLAGLEN departs from his usual sailor role to act a baggage man in a big railroad station. The girl who tends the newspaper stand rather likes him and has ambitions for his future but he thinks it would be grand just to be a fireman on an engine. Yet when he saves the child of one of the high officials of the road from being crushed by a heavy trunk, his best idea of improving his position is to ask to be made head of the lost and found department, much to the girl's disgust. The next time, however, he saves the train from being held up by a gang of robbers and is made engineer. The picture contains much incidental humor in the form of juggling trunks.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—6 reels)

Syncopation

Directed by.....*Bert Glennon*
Featuring.....*Barbara Bennett*, *Bobby Watson*
Novel "Stepping High" by Gene Markey

SOUND picture dealing with the life of two vaudeville dancers. The girl attracts the attention of a millionaire society man who is backing a cabaret. She thinks that he is interested in her art and becomes more and more dissatisfied with her humble partner from whom she finally parts. She tries to open a new cabaret with a different partner but finds however that she is a failure without her old team mate. Realizing her mistake and having spurned the millionaire she becomes reconciled to her partner. The acting honors go to Bobby Watson who does an excellent interpretation of an old "hoofer."

For family audience including young people.
(RKO—8 reels)

The Voice of the City

Directed by.....*Willard Mack*
Featuring.....*Robert Ames*
Original screen story by Willard Mack

AN interesting crook melodrama. A young man is framed by the leader of a notorious gang and sent to prison. He escapes from the prison with the aid of a friend and remains in hiding in this friend's house. The leader of the gang makes love to the young man's sweetheart in an attempt to try and discover where the boy is hiding. With her help the leader falls into a trap and is forced to confess his guilt. Willard Mack of stage fame not only wrote and directed this picture but in addition played a prominent part in it.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

The Wild Party

Directed by.....*Dorothy Arzner*
Featuring.....*Clara Bow*
Novel by Warner Fabian

A ROMANTIC-COMEDY of college flappers introducing Clara Bow to the "talkies." The college cut-up, who is also one of the most popular students, falls in love with a young professor. Disgusted with the girl's lack of real understanding as to the meaning of a college education and feeling the hopelessness of bringing her to the realization of her futility, the professor tries to put her out of his heart and mind but finds it impossible. To shield her best friend against some scandal which will prevent her from winning a scholarship, the girl takes the blame and leaves college under a cloud. Although this is the end of college it is the beginning of love, for the professor learns the truth and goes after her.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

NON-FEATURES

Across the Seas

A musical number by the Royal Hawaiians.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

Allah 'L Allah
(Ufa Oddities)

An educational travelogue.
For family audience including children.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

An Alpine Pastoral
(World We Live In Series)

Charming views of Alpine scenery.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

An Ancient Art
(Ufa Oddities)

The art of modeling.
For family audience including children.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Bridle By-ways

Pleasures of horseback riding.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Close Figuring
(Sportlight Series)

Acrobatics and athletics requiring great accuracy.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

The Dying Jungle
(Ufa Oddities)

Showing how the white man has cleared the African jungle for planting and given profitable work to the natives.
For family audience including children.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Going Home

Movietone—the Kentucky Jubilee Singers in a spiritual number.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

Historic Hungary

Scenic of Hungary including Budapest.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

Inspiration

A musical number of Schubert's songs.
For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—1 reel)

A Jungle Orphan
(Ufa Oddities)

Lion hunting in Africa showing an incident in which a mother lion is killed and the hunters adopt the cub.
For family audience including children.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Old Black Joe

A cartoon song number.
For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Pathe Review Nos. 11, 12

For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—1 real each)

Pathe Review Nos. 10, 13-19

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 real each)

Secret Boozehounds
(Ufa Oddities)

Showing how tree sap intoxicates small bugs of many kinds.
For family audience including children.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

South Sea Songs and Dances

A musical number in which the Royal Hawaiians play for the dancers.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

Water Boy

Movietone in which the Kentucky Jubilee Singers sing a favorite spiritual.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

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Featuring .....Gertrude Lawrence

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For family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

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(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald goes fishing and as usual his only catch is trouble.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

His College Chums

A jazz orchestra skit.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—2 reels)

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(Collegians Series)

Calford goes in for strenuous sports.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

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For family audience including young people.

(Universal—2 reels)

Meet the Missus

Vaudeville skit in which a married man's philandering has no serious consequences.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—2 reels)

Now and Then

Skit showing a modern party and a party in grandma's day.

For the family audience including young people.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Post-Mortems

Farce about bridge post-mortems. A burglar and his pal come to rob a house but stay to play bridge with the husband and his wife who have quarreled over their bridge game earlier in the evening.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—2 reels)

Pusher-in-the-Face

All-talking comedy. Annoyed at the talking of a woman who sits back of him at the theatre, a man suddenly jumps to his feet and pushes her in the face. He is arrested but the judge, after hearing his story, dismisses the case.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—3 reels)

Stage Stunts

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald goes on the stage.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

Stop Barking

Buster Brown comedy. Tige goes to get a tooth pulled.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

Treasurer's Report

Movietone act in which Robert Benchley gives his version of a treasurer's report.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—1 reel)

Yankee Doodle Boy

Comedy song hit with words by George M. Cohan.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Zip! Boom! Bang!

An all-talking comedy of a family at the circus. There is plenty of excitement when all the animals escape.

For family audience including children.

(Educational—2 reels)

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. IV, No. 5 May, 1929

Cessarskaya in "The Village of Sin" (*see page 5*)

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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The Creative Power of the Sound Film

By Gena Branscombe

With the National Music Week observance centering interest in things musical and the sound film at the present time receiving major attention in the sphere of the motion picture, the thoughts presented here on music and pictures are quite timely. Miss Branscombe is a well known American composer who has written musical dramas, among them "Pilgrims of Destiny" and "Bells of Circumstance" and many songs.—Editor's Note.

WE all know that music in the movies has not always fulfilled the heart's desire. In the cheaper houses we have encountered all too frequently the little lady who knew just two chords for the left hand, while she played an almost-recognizable melody by ear with the right. It is a long way from that to our beautifully appointed moving picture theatres, with their great symphony orchestras, corps de ballet, choruses and distinguished soloists. But here, even, something just as incongruous, but not so excruciating, has been happening. We may find a drama, dealing with contemporary American life, being musically illustrated by the Slavic rhythms of nineteenth century Tschaikowsky, or the poignant operatic melodies of the French Massenet; while the marvelous music of Wagner—Wagner who fought and bled for synchronization of tone and word—is torn from its setting in small pieces and made to do for almost anything—the music of the German Rhine Maidens escorting Washington across the Delaware! Time and again we have been jolted and startled completely out of the mood of a picture by music which held a definite dramatic significance for us elsewhere.

A sound picture that does not synchronize in its musical and dramatic content can never be called a work of art, though ten million dollars and ten thousand experts be used in the making of it. We are beginning to know here in America that the spiritual life of a nation is bound up in its art life.

We can be of immense service in creating a public opinion that will demand good music as it demands good films, and we know that the producers and theatre managers will always give the public what it wants. Our work is indeed with the public.

In France, the government commissioned Rabaud, one of its distinguished composers, to write the score for *The Miracle of the Wolves,* a picture with scenes laid in medieval Carcasonne, and made with such artistic fidelity that the electrical fixtures in the ancient town were taken down in order that there should be no false note anywhere. This picture, and subsequent films with scores written by distinguished French composers, were given at the Paris Opera, (with all its musical prestige), the name of the composer being equally honored with the author and the dramatic principals. Thus the sound picture as an art form.

In America as yet we have very few original scores. We have perhaps three dozen scores that are sixty per cent the work of one man. Among them are the scores for the pictures *Ben Hur, The Big Parade, Mare Nostrum* and *The Scarlet Letter*. They were all mainly the work of Dr. William Axt, and have a continuity and dramatic effectiveness which takes them out of the class of the ordinary pieced-together score. For complete scores, Henry Hadley wrote the music for *When A Man Loves* which featured John

Gena Branscombe

Barrymore and Dolores Costello. Maurice Baron and Erno Rapee made a synchronized score for *The River*. Dr. William Axt did a complete score for *La Boheme*, and a most artistic and charming score it was.

You will remember in one of the older operas, (very humorous we find it nowadays), that the heroine runs about, gaily singing little trilly waltz songs when she is supposed to be violently and tragically insane. We do not do that anymore. A unity of purpose between drama and music is a basic necessity. It is our duty to encourage our best composers to seek this outlet for their efforts. Even now in the laboratories, a theatrical improvement of over one hundred per cent in mechanical perfection has been made above that in the current commercial productions. These scientific men accomplish before they talk, and our composers must realize that here at hand is a fluid, evolving vehicle, ready to be used and moulded.

F. W. MURNAU, the German director, states in *Film Mercury*, some prophetic thoughts which must find echo in many motion picture goers' feelings. He said: "For many years the 'movies' have not developed a great deal. People said 'we must do this and that because we have always done this and that.' The audiences learned exactly what to expect. Pictures in the past have too often been made by a formula, so much of scenery, so much of love making, the good rewarded, the villian punished, everything finished off very neatly. Too often pictures have made the world banal instead of revealing new heights and depths in life. One would think to look at them that there were only beautiful women in the world and young men with broad shoulders and flashing eyes! I think that pictures of the future will show persons rather than screen personalities, humanity instead of stars.

"The chief change they made in the movies for a while was to spend more money, and then still more money on pictures,—big sets, elaborate historical costumes, mob scenes, the destruction of property, spectacles, 'epics.' They advertised as the great reason for going to see their picture: 'It Cost a Million Dollars,' until people perhaps came to feel that they were not being treated fairly unless they saw a city burned down or five thousand extras all in wigs and costumes on the screen at the same time. That, I firmly believe, is not what the pictures of the future will have to do. I think that in the film of the future the story itself will be more important than splendid sets and costumes. The motion picture of the future will not cost so much. It is the mechanical end of picture making now that is holding us back. Forty per cent of the director's time is spent on getting the machinery of the studio arranged as he wishes. By the time he comes to the actual making of the scene where he needs all his creative ability, all his power of imagination, he is already tired from his struggles with the materials."

Exceptional Photoplays

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers who are looking beyond what the popular theatres have to offer.

SECRETARY

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Alfred B. Kuttner
Wilton A. Barrett

The Village of Sin

Directed by ..... *Olga Preobrajenskaya*
Photographed by ..... *K. Kuznetzoff*

The Cast

Vassili Shironin ..... *A. Yastrebitzky*
Anna ..... *R. Puzhnaya*
Vasilissa ..... *E. Cessarskaya*
Ivan ..... *G. Babynin*
Nicholai ..... *M. Savelieff*
Lukeria ..... *E. Maksimova*
Matveyevna ..... *C. Narbekova*

Original screen story by O. P. Wishnewskaya

THAT the art of the folk—the direct representation of simple people as they dwell, behave and feel among one another, and as they are seen through the focus of the community—can find powerful and lyrical expression through the motion picture has been indicated more than once. Perhaps, heretofore, when it has attempted to uncover the lives of a primitive set and to relate, through revelation of characteristics commonly inherent in the race, those lives to the lives of all men and women, despite alien backgrounds, habits and points of view, that cinema art has most truly achieved the universal, made its appeal to all peoples, and, by inscribing the record, spanned time that lays away human feeling and memory alike in the dust. Yet the feeling for life in the sense of its grasp of profound truth which is most intensifying, most life-giving to other arts, is hardest to look for in the art of the cinema. Cinematic language had been developed to the point of becoming an understood and exact expressive form, or was on the point of so becoming, when the talking film temporarily or otherwise arrested its process of invention. But rarely in a pure and unadulterated way has it been used to evoke the raw material of which the human bone and soul are made and which is most simply and eloquently expressed in the actions and emotions of those so close to the soil as to be able to feel still the experiences of early men. Where that has occurred, criticism has been more concerned with definition for the mechanics employed, when it has been as unprofitable as it would be to estimate the poetry of Burns to the tune of scansion. The simple moving thing on the screen has mostly gone neglected by producer and public alike, and for this, due at least partly to lack of critical emphasis on the necessity of life quality, the motion picture has missed the opportunity, except in broad comedy and cartoon, which are essentially folk, to take its place as a purveyor of folk-feeling. In fulfilling this function, and in doing it with remarkable vividness and richness, the Russian film *The Village of Sin* recalls what the screen can do, and do supremely.

Here is a tragic ballad of folk life—a simple story of earthy passions presented through a scrupulous envisaging of the folk themselves. There is no comment and no explanation—nothing extraneous, excepting that their lives are lived in a moment of transition from one social order to another with the implication that through betterment of their environment what they have been they will not be in the future—which is neither here nor there. The importance of the film is in its faithfulness to the thing it has to show—the history of a family that we can take it is not very much different from any other family of the particular breed and circumstance, and the consequences that ensue from that family's integrated existence. The success with which

The Arrival at the Marriage Feast

this film does this is the measure of its superiority—superiority that is due to a sincerity that gives the appearance of being naive. It is the art that disguises itself in utter simplicity—a transcription of human beings through that most difficult of all methods, making them believable as they really are. That the motion picture can do this, and in this film does do it again, is all that need concern those who look for it to be a form of expression worthy of the most intelligent respect and acclaim.

The Village of Sin could better have been labeled "The Village Women"—in the sense that Jeffers calls his poem "The Women at Point Sur". It is about the peasant women of Taptyki village, a community made typical of rural Russia. The men hardly do more than pass as stationary actors through the story, planted like machines to grind the grist of meaning; they are characters set there for a purpose—Vassili Shironin, the brutal, lecherous kulak permitted by custom to rule the souls and bodies of the women of his household; Ivan, his honest but uncomprehending son; Nicholai, the village blacksmith, hard, rough, who left to himself might in the end be another Vasilli but for the fact that the times have changed and his mate reaches with a spiritual fortitude toward the future to make a better being of herself and Nicholai. But the women of the picture—the grist brought to the mill! Matveyevna, the shrivelled and callously neglected wife of Shironin; Lukeria, the coarse, ruthless, deeply earthy servant in his household who has usurped the place of the old wife; Anna, the defenseless, child-like and victimized daughter-in-law; and Vasilissa, Shironin's staunch, rebellious and spiritually magnificent daughter (beautifully played by the actress Cessarskaya)—they constitute a gallery of portraits, signifying woman in her attitudes of servitude, feminine mastery, hopelessness and hope, that for sheer realistic projection it would be difficult to match in any one picture on the screen. Perhaps this penetration and presentation of women is due to the fact that the film was directed by a woman, Olga Preobrajenskaya; anyway it is informed by a certain feeling of sympathy for

The Peasants' All Souls' Day—The Swing

the women characters that colors the harsh material as that directoress turns it about before her camera, where otherwise its manner is masculine and bold. Hers is the work of a mature artist, one of the most interesting among the startling Russians who have in the last few years cast illumination on the cinema art.

This film identifies itself with the few films of authentic realism. Its moments of pastoral loveliness are scarcely to be matched, likewise its capture of the countryside, of wind and leaf and waving wheat, of the beings that live, plough, mow, procreate and weep, are born, breathe awhile and pass upon the surface of the soil. Made of such material, the final pattern is inevitable—a tragedy of fortitude and submission to what man in his passion and ignorance can make of his existence—whether he be alien peasant or something else. And in cinematic movement and photographic excellence the film is compelling.

Produced by Sovkino of Moscow; distributed by Amkino Corporation.

Nicholai and Vasilissa

Shifting Values in Talking Pictures

THE LETTER, SHOW BOAT, BROADWAY MELODY *and* THE DESERT SONG *show exceptional qualities as sound or talking pictures. They illustrate the latest advance in this new medium. This general article at the same time relates them to other experimental pictures through which sound reproduction is making such rapid progress.*—THE EDITORS.

JUST six months ago we wrote an editorial in a somewhat prophetic strain concerning the talking picture. Prophecy has never been very much to our fancy but it was not taking any great risk to affirm our conviction that the talking picture had come to stay, if not forever, then at least for a very long time indeed. The motion picture, child of the machine in the first place, was making another mechanical advance, an advance foreseen and anticipated in many quarters. Practically the entire industry is now quite properly set upon making talking pictures, having no doubt realized that in a mechanical age it is fatal to resist the machine.

Artistically the first result of this feverish activity was to bring about a state of confusion.

Old standards for judging the artistic worth of pictures, the specific emphasis upon their cinematic quality combined with their pictorial appeal became almost useless. Critical judgment for a time was in complete abeyance. Pictures had suddenly become slow and static, with far fewer scenes and with the actors themselves almost rigid, glued as they were to the spot before some concealed microphone.

And yet all things considered the progress in talking pictures not only technically but artistically as well has been remarkable, has indeed probably been greater in less than a year than it was in the first decade of the development of the silent picture. One by one critics and producers who had at first held out against them, have capitulated. If some of them still held out until recently and pointed to Dreyer's *Joan* as a supreme example of what the voiceless screen could do they will find scant comfort in the fact that this director regrets that he did not make *Joan* a talkie.

First Steps

The first talking pictures just talked, sang, or indeed shrieked. They were conveniently patterned after stage plays with a preference for melodramas or for thrillers, just as the silent pictures were in the beginning, when it was considered sufficient to photograph a play on the stage almost in its entirety. There was also a preference for mystery or ghost plots where the young microphone could disport itself with unearthly howls or terrifying roars. *The Jazz Singer,* the Warner Brothers picture which first made the talkie heard around the world, was even simpler in that it was little more than the glorification of a voice already known and loved by millions of people. To tell the public that it could hear Al Jolson talk and sing in a pleasing story of sentimental appeal at prices within the reach of all was equivalent to having packed houses almost before the doors were opened. The same thing applies to Fanny Brice in *My Man.* Among these earlier talking pictures examples like *The Lion And The Mouse* were quickly outmoded, to be followed by more sophisticated types like *Interference* and *The Doctor's Secret* or, to come right down to the present day along this line, *The Trial of Mary Dugan.*

The Letter

The Letter, one of the latest of the court room melodramas built largely around an ordeal in the witness chair, again marks a definite advance. It shows a new range and flexibility, and an independence from too close adherence to the microphone which is especially noticeable in the diminished or increased voice volume according to the true exigencies of the situations and of the movements of the characters.

This expertly fashioned melodrama of a faithless wife in the tropics who kills the lover who has tired of her and then finds herself in the blackmailing hands of a native woman, provides an excellent vehicle for the talents of Jeanne Eagels. In the screen version as well as in the play the wife's apparently simple though utterly false recital on the witness stand of her relations with the murdered man, furnishes the big climax. This is one of the longest talking monologues we have yet heard from the screen but it is most effective and goes to show that a long speech, if really dramatic and contrived with literary skill, can now be used as successfully in the talking picture as on the stage, once the mechanical difficulties of delivering it naturally have been overcome.

The remaining scenes, notably those in the native quarter where Mr. Somerset Maugham's genius for indicating a sinister oriental atmosphere give opportunity both for the microphone and for the camera, with the camera, of course, building up a wealth of detail to supplement the voice, which could only be suggested by a few strokes on the stage. *The Letter,* in its own class, is an excellent example of a well knit, carefully constructed talking picture.

Outdoor Talkies

Two notable examples of outdoor talking pictures have already shown what can be done with this form of motion picture entertainment outside of the studios. *In Old Arizona* was a delight in this respect and perhaps indicates a new lease of life for the fast vanishing Western as the technique of taking sound pictures in the open improves. This picture was taken under exceptionally favorable circumstances in pretty complete isolation on a desert site where fortuitous noises would to a

large extent be absent. The reproduction of natural sounds other than the artificial emphasis of footfalls or knocks on doors which are sometimes annoying in studio pictures, was here already unusually successful and it is perhaps not to much to hope that the shutting out of undesirable sounds will some day be so perfected that outdoor talking pictures will be feasible in almost any location. What was particularly interesting about *In Old Arizona* was that you not only heard the sound but that you could by contrast appreciate the *real* silence of the desert scenes.

Hearts In Dixie also deserved a wide appreciation. This simple and unaffected picture of Southern negro life in the cotton country and along the river fronts, if it dealt somewhat conventionally with negro psychology, had often the charm of real negro humor or the appeal of a negro spiritual. The carefree life of the cotton field workers, the bustle of activity when the river steamer drew up at the levee and the merry-making at the wedding were made all the more alluring by speech and song. And the picture gave us Stepin Fetchit, a gentleman with a priceless manner, voice and name all in one.

Show Boat

This picture is ushered in by a long prologue with many of the principals and the chorus of the stage show participating and with, of course, Bledsoe's beautiful rendition of "Old Man River", but follows Edna Ferber's novel rather than Ziegfeld's glorification of it. Here too, though the picture is only part talking, we find a breadth and a sweep which is prophetic of the talking picture's greater freedom. In fact the introduction of more talking and sound effects in the first part of the story, more of the churning of paddle wheels, of the creaking of the ship and of the heave and swish of the Mississippi would have provided a better balance to the second part where sound is liberally employed.

But the colorful life on the show boat, the joyful landings after the loudly announced approach through the steam calliope, are admirably rendered and the charming acting of the little child who impersonates the heroine's stormy girlhood is a joy to behold. Then follow the naive renditions of the howling melodramas in which the river dwellers seem to delight, while ever and again as the show boat moves at night or in the day up and down the river we get a sense of the river's life and of how it must affect the lives of those who spend their days upon it. There is a frequent use of double exposure showing the waters flowing in superimposed fashion through the scenes of the story.

Later, as we follow Ravenal's fluctuating fortunes as he slides down to the last showy pretenses of the gambler, dialogue is more insistently resorted to, culminating in a final scene of recrimination. At the end when Ravenal returns to the show boat in the hope of forgiveness the theme song of "Old Man River" rises again and gives the scene of reconciliation an emotional validity which it might have been hard to accept in a silent version.

In following the talking picture's encroachments upon the various forms of stage entertainment to which it has inevitably turned in its present transitional stage until it can overcome its technical problems more completely and perfect its sound and talking equivalents for the cinematic impetus which the screen has temporarily lost by abandoning the silent form, we must not forget to consider its approximations of the musical comedy and the operetta. It has been claimed that these stage forms have nothing to fear from the talking pictures because it can never successfully equal the intimacy of the revue or approach its personal and physical appeal. A brief glance at *The Broadway Melody* may upset this confidence somewhat. There is a dash about this picture, a first row intimacy with the persons of the chorus and an enhancement of physical appeal through song and music which makes it a serious contender for the unique sphere of the musical comedy. The addition of some fine color photography to the scenes of the musical show action gives further effectiveness. And, of course, the picture can always be more lavish, more bounteous in beauty and richness by concentrating more resources into a single effort than a musical comedy can as a rule command. Then too a full-fledged Vitaphone operetta has recently arrived in the form of *The Desert Song*. This offering gives as much song, as much dancing, as much costume, and much, much more real desert and furiously riding Riffs than the original possibly could. And though the plot here is weak the talking picture is willing—to try again. Thus the talking picture talks and moves on to new forms and new experiments.

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

WATERBURY, Connecticut, was the scene for the most recent showing of the National Board's historic compilation of the progress of the motion picture, *The March of the Movies.* The showing was under the auspices of the Waterbury Better Films Council, an affiliated committee of the Better Films National Council and was held in the Y. M. C. A. auditorium, donated for the use of the Council. The Council reports that the large auditorium was completely filled and the audience was most enthusiastic. This film depicts the rise of the motion picture from the time of its initial offering in 1896 up to the latest in invention and technique of the present day. This activity of the Council served to bring added attention to its continued efforts in bringing unusual pictures to the city and in encouraging the support of the more worth while pictures as they come to the theatres. *The March of the Movies,* has been received with much applause and praise in many cities and the National Board is glad to welcome Waterbury as another of those interested in extending the study of the motion picture through this unique visual method.

WITH the purpose of explaining and extending the work and organization of Community Better Films Committees, delegates from the Sixth District of the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs and the various organizations composing the Rutherford, N. J. Better Films Committee met at a spring tea conference on April 26th. The meeting which brought together a large representation of club members and guests interested in better films was held in the club house of the Rutherford Women's Club. The Secretary of the Better Films National Council explained the work of the National Council and its affiliated committees and paid tribute to the Rutherford Committee which has so ably carried out the ideal of a real community committee, bringing into the work practically all of the organized groups of the city. An invitation was offered to the representatives present from other New Jersey cities to join with the Better Films National Council as affiliated better films committees.

The many angles of the Better Films Committee work were ably presented by the various officers of the Rutherford Committee. Mrs. Harry G. Grover, the President, sketched the five years of the Committee's growth, characterizing the Committee as a laboratory experiment in the study of the motion picture. The committee activities described were the Exceptional Photoplays Committee, the Family Week-end Programs, Library Co-operation and the Visual Education Committee. Two pictures exhibited under the Visual Education Committee gave an added interest to the program. They were *Roosevelt and the Birds,* loaned especially for the occasion by Roosevelt House in New York City, and *Communing with the Heavens.* Tea and cake were served during an informal group discussion of motion pictures following the program.

IF the importance of the motion picture in present day life is to be judged from the attention being given to it by various groups organized for some specific work along other lines then it is unquestionably of notable importance. Motion picture or better films departments are now a division of work of many large organizations among them the New York State Federation of Home Bureaus. Mrs. Henry Burden, an officer of the Federation of Home Bureaus, has for several years been interested in this phase of the work and has attended the Conferences of the National Board of Review. Mrs. Frank Shutts, President of the Oneonta (N. Y.) Better Films Council, is a member of the Committee on Motion Pictures of the New York Federation so that the two interests are linked through the active work of many in both fields.

It was our pleasure to find a further proof of the interest of the Home Bureaus Federation in this subject at the annual meeting of the Eastern District of the Federation held at the Commodore Hotel in New York City,

April 11th and 12th. Among the topics presented dealing with home economics, marketing, the business field of the home economist and so forth, was the subject which we feel is of current interest to all organizations, that of better films. The editor of this department was pleased to be invited to bring to one of the afternoon sessions a message from the National Board of Review and the plan of organized Better Films Committee work sponsored by the Board. Mrs. Edward Eddy, a member of the Board of Directors of the State Federation and Chairman of the Eastern District has said in writing of the meeting that "the women were intensely interested in what is to us all—especially the mothers—a most vital problem."

RECENT developments in motion pictures was the subject of the April meeting of the Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee. Pictorially treating the topic, two new trends in films were demonstrated by the showing of a recently perfected color process and an outstanding amateur product.

Mrs. Rosalie Ashton, representing the Artchrome Film Laboratories, gave an interesting explanation in connection with the color pictures presented. "The two dominating factors of the movies today are color and sound," said Mrs. Ashton and she told how this new and most effective method of producing color pictures was made possible by the inspiration of a woman, Miss Alice Craft. The three reels of natural color pictures shown included views of New York City, animals in the New York Zoological Garden and some examples of advertising film showing the possibility of the color picture for educational and commercial uses. Mrs. Ashton was formerly head of President Hoover's War Film Library and has done much research in film work abroad so that she has brought to the new field a background of motion picture experience.

The Fall of the House of Usher, an adaptation of the Edgar Allan Poe story, photographed by two amateur producers in Rochester, N. Y., was shown. This picture was filmed in an old barn and by the use of prisms and mirrors many weird effects were achieved. It is the latest and most talked-of-amateur-made movie.

THE value of united effort in the accomplishment of constructive better films activity is fully appreciated by the organizations of the state of Rhode Island. This is demonstrated in the formation of the Better Films Council of Rhode Island. A leader in bringing about this consolidation of interests is Mrs. George C. Harrison, who has done much to spread information on good motion pictures throughout the state. Mrs. Harrison was a member of the Conference Committee of the annual meeting of the National Board of Review held in January and we were glad to learn from the following report of her latest activity:

"The presidents and motion picture chairmen of the six state organizations who are cooperating in motion picture work in Rhode Island, met at the home of Mrs. George C. Harrison, Chairman of Motion Pictures for the State Federation of Women's Clubs, on Monday, March 25th and formed the "Better Films Council of Rhode Island" with Mrs. Harrison as chairman. The groups represented are the Rhode Island State Federation of Women's Clubs, the Congress of Parents and Teachers of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Council of Women, the Rhode Island Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Rhode Island State Federation of Women's Church Societies and the Rhode Island Sunshine.

"Through these groups we plan to increase the interest in the finer types of photoplays, and to cooperate to the best of our ability, with the exhibitor who books in a special type of picture for a given week. Spring vacation week in the public schools of Providence began April 6th. Three of our exhibitors had fine programs especially endorsed by the Film Council.

"At a meeting of the Rhode Island Council of Women, held March 27th, Mr. Arthur DeBra of the Motion Pictures Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., addressed a large and representative group of women upon the subject of motion pictures. He stressed the effective and important work being accomplished by women's organizations in creating an interest in the finer productions, thus encouraging both producer and exhibitor to meet the demand for the better type of pictures.

THE Mothers' Club of Public School Number 19 of New York City has added to its many activities for the good of the young people that of better films. This school is located in Corona, Long Island, New York, a suburban community of home interests, and they wisely believe that the concerted action of the mothers in working with neighborhood theatre exhibitors for appropriate programs for children at appropriate times will result in much good. The editor of this department of the NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW MAGAZINE had the pleasure of visiting the club at its April meeting and outlining to the mothers the plan of a Community Better Films organization. The number present gave little doubt of the interest which this subject holds for the mothers and we hope to be of service to the Club in perfecting its plans for a better films committee.

THE members of the Atlanta Better Films Committee took a trip by proxy to Hollywood at their last luncheon meeting when Dr. M. L. Brittain, President of Georgia Institute of Technology told of his trip with the "Tech" football champions. Needless to say the journey was a very profitable and interesting one. Another feature of this particular program was the talk given by Miss Beverly Bane, the former film star now playing in a stock company in Atlanta, in which she threw highlights on the work of both stage and screen. Quite a number of new members of civic, cultural and religious societies were introduced by the extension chairman. A request was made for speakers for the different clubs who were interested in the work of the Committee and desired further information on the subject. These indications of the growing interest in the better films movement are most gratifying and encouraging. The Atlanta group had as their feature at a recent matinee the ever popular *Simba,* which aroused more than the usual interest as one of the Boy Scouts who was on the expedition with the Martins was an Atlanta boy, Douglas Oliver.

MUSIC WEEK observed annually in the "merrie month of May" makes motion picture devotees think particularly of music, and with the sound film so far perfected, and so popular, almost every picture is now a music-motion picture. This being true we think our Better Films Committees workers, always alert for ideas, may find something of interest for their Juniors' Matinees in the new Young Peoples Page of the magazine "Singing and Playing." It is to be, according to announcement, "a co-operative page where the parent, the child and the editor will meet." The editor is Miss Dorothy Gordon who presents such delightful programs of musical material for children—songs of many lands and many peoples with the singer appropriately costumed for the various numbers. Miss Gordon has recently had published a book entitled "Sing It Yourself" which consists of folk songs with accompanying stories. A question-and-answer column will be conducted as a part of her young peoples page, so doubtless here is a means of mutual help for Better Films Committees in things musical to please the young people. The publisher of Miss Gordon's book is E. P. Dutton and Company, 300 Fourth Avenue, New York City, and the price is $3.50.

A BOOK which according to report different Motion Picture Study Clubs have found of interest is "The High Faith of Fiction and Drama" by Dr. William L. Stidger. Dr. Stidger is a preacher of note and his use of literature and drama as a source of sermon material has been described in several different books. In this his latest book he makes use of the motion picture also as a basis for sermons. Among the films analyzed from which inspirational messages are derived are *The Big Parade, Ben Hur* and *Seventh Heaven.* Since this book has been found to be of value as motion picture study material we wish to call it to the attention of our Better Films Committee readers and to those churchmen who combine the showing of a motion picture with their Sunday night sermon service. One minister who recently visited our office and looked over the volume had this to say of it, when writing later—

"The book, 'The High Faith of Fiction and Drama,' I think is fine. Thank you very much for opening up something splendid to me."

Doubleday, Doran and Company, Garden City, Long Island, New York, are the publishers of this book and it is priced at $2.00.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
FRANCES C. BARRETT

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

*—*Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

* Betrayal

Directed by.....*Lewis Milestone*
Featuring.....*Emil Jannings*
Original screen story by Victor Schertzinger and Nicholas Soussanin

A DRAMA laid in the Swiss Alps. A young village girl, who has been deserted by her lover, a romantic young artist, is forced by her father to marry the town burgomaster. In him she finds a good and faithful husband, and her only unhappiness is caused by the yearly visit of her former lover and the fear that he will some day claim his son, the oldest of her two boys. On the night that he tells her she must reveal the truth to her husband and relinquish her son, they are killed in an accident. The husband after their death discovers their secret and in his blind rage tries to wreak vengeance on the child. In the end, however, he learns that his wife had not been unfaithful to him since marriage and he cherishes both boys alike. The acting of the entire cast is excellent but especially that of Jannings as the middle-age villager into whose easy-going life comes a startling revelation. The direction is noteworthy the story being smoothly unfolded with very few titles.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

California Mail

Directed by.....*Albert Rogell*
Featuring.....*Ken Maynard*
Original screen story by Marion Jackson

A WESTERN romance of Civil War days. A handsome and daring young man in the employ of the secret service, joins up with a band of outlaws in order to learn all about them. Two stage coach companies compete in a cross country race to determine which is the better coach for carrying mail. The young man drives one of the coaches and wins the race. Later in a daring and dashing way, he traps the outlaws and captures the girl he loves.

For family audience including children.

(First National—6 reels)

The Charlatan

Directed by.....*George Melford*
Featuring.....*Holmes Herbert, Rockcliffe Fellowes, Margaret Livingston*
Play by Ernest Pascal and Leonard Praskins

A DRAMA of revenge. A circus performer, deserted by his wife, leaves the show business and poses as a Hindu crystal gazer, awaiting the time to avenge himself. Years later he finds his wife and with her his daughter, now grown to womanhood. He

cleverly proves to his daughter the wrong her mother has done and after he has had his revenge, he and his daughter are reconciled.

For family audience including young people.

(Universal—7 reels)

Coquette

Directed by.....*Sam Taylor*
Featuring.....*Mary Pickford*
Play by Ann Preston Bridgers and George Abbott

MARY PICKFORD in adopting the new technique of the talking film has also given us a new Mary, almost, with bobbed hair and grown-up manners playing the part of an impetuous flirt. *Coquette* is the story of a Southern girl who falls in love with a man of whom her father disapproves. Enraged at the youth for daring to love his daughter, the father kills him. With her father on trial for his life, the daughter tries to protect him by testifying that he was justified by the young man's action. Ashamed at the disgrace his daughter's false testimony will bring on her, the father takes it upon himself to atone for the wrong he has done. The best portion of the film is that where Mary Pickford as Norma Besant struggles with herself before deciding to save her father who has brought such unhappiness into her life. Whether this is the role for Miss Pickford each one must decide for himself but it will be quite worth while to see the picture whatever the verdict.

For family audience including young people.

(United Artists—9 reels)

A Dangerous Woman

Directed by.....*Roland V. Lee*
Featuring .....{*Olga Baclanova* / *Clive Brook*}
Story by Margaret H. Lawrence

A ROMANTIC drama of the African jungle. The young and beautiful wife of an Englishman stationed in Central East Africa, finds her only recreation in luring her husband's brother into a relationship which causes friction between the brothers. Her husband, realizing that she is ruining not only his own life but that of his younger brother, poisons the glass of water left at her bedside by the servant. Knowing the dire consequences of such an act, the man's faithful servant removes the water but puts instead a poisonous snake in the room, and so the wife's death appears accidental and the brothers are reconciled. This picture was titled at first *The Woman Who Needed Killing* which title perhaps was discarded because it gave away the story of the picture from the beginning. Baclanova is a finished artist and succeeds in making emphatic any part she portrays.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

The Donovan Affair

Directed by.....*Frank Capra*
Featuring .....*Jack Holt*
Play by Owen Davis

A MYSTERY melodrama in which a smart-alec detective tries to solve a murder without success until one of the characters, himself suspected on account of his timidity, helps him to find a plausible solution. Just before he is murdered the victim displays a ring for which he claims mystic powers. The lights are turned down in order to show that the ring glows with a mysterious light. The mystery is deepened when a second victim, again suspected by the detective and his aid is also stabbed to death by the real culprit, who is finally trapped by an unexpected device.

For family audience including young people.

(Columbia—9 reels)

* Gentlemen of the Press

Directed by.....*Millard Webb*
Featuring .....*Walter Huston*
Play by Ward Morehouse

THE dramatic story of a newspaper man who gives so much time to the paper that he misses all the big events in his family. He is surprised one day to discover that his daughter is married when she brings her husband to see him. In the meantime he has become infatuated with his secretary but he is about to break off with her when he discovers that his son-in-law is being lured by her wiles so to save his daughter from unhappiness he decides to go on with his affair. Later delighted at the prospect of being a grandfather, he is leaving the office of the newspaper to go to the hospital to see his daughter when the news of a liner sinking is brought in and he

must get the story out at once. Like other events in his life, family matters, to his sorrow, are again made second. An excellent picture well done, revealing in a realistic manner the ever interesting life behind the newspaper.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

The Hole in the Wall

Directed by ..... *Robert Florey*
Featuring ..... *Claudette Colbert*, *E. C. Robinson*

Play by Frederick Jackson

A GANG of thieves have a novel "racket." A fake medium acts as the lure to attract rich victims who are afterwards robbed when the necessary information about their jewels has been procured. The girl member of the gang who has been acting as the medium is killed in an accident. Just then another girl arrives who has served a prison sentence on a false accusation of theft. She wants to be avenged on the woman who caused her conviction and consents to act as the medium on the condition that the gang help her to kidnap the woman's granddaughter. The kidnapping becomes a sensational police case and an alert reporter suspects that the gang has something to do with it. He brings the woman to consult the medium about the child. In a remarkable scene the medium appears to get a message from one of the members of the gang who has just drowned telling her that the child is in grave danger. The police break in but the whereabouts of the child is not revealed until the woman admits that she accused the girl falsely, thus exonerating her.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—7 reels)

The House of Horrors

Directed by ..... *Benjamin Christensen*
Featuring ..... *Louise Fazenda*, *Chester Conklin*

Original screen story by Richard Vee

A MYSTERY story. An old storekeeper and his wife are summoned by a mysterious messenger to go to their Uncle Abner's house in the city. They arrive at night in the midst of a storm, only to find the house filled with weird noises and strange people who appear and disappear without warning. After a horrible night they discover the cause of all the ghostly acts.

For family audience including young people.
(First National—7 reels)

* Innocents of Paris

Directed by ..... *Richard Wallace*
Featuring ..... *Maurice Chevalier*
Story by C. E. Andrews

THIS Parisian romance serves to introduce to the American screen the clever pantomime and singing of the French musical comedy ace, Maurice Chevalier. Brought together through strange circumstances, a poor boy and a wealthy girl fall in love. The boy has an offer from a musical comedy but the girl is jealous of the popularity she knows he will attain. Willing to give up his career for the only thing in his life worth while the boy tells the manager he has decided not to go on the stage. Shamed by his generosity the girl insists that he continue and having won the blessing of her father, all is happiness.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—10 reels)

Molly and Me

Directed by ..... *Albert Ray*
Featuring ..... *Belle Bennett*, *Joe E. Brown*

Original screen story by Lois Leeson

BUILT around a song theme "In the Land of Make Believe" is this story of burlesque troupers. Jim and Molly Wilson have played "the sticks" for years always the hope of making Broadway. Finally the chance comes to Jim but not to Molly. The split-up of the team inevitably leads to a parting which brings only sadness to both. The reunion is appealingly done in a way to please those who like a happy ending as well as those who like the spice of vaudeville.

For family audience including young people.
(Tiffany-Stahl—9 reels)

Mother's Boy

Directed by ..... *Bradley Barker*
Featuring ..... *Morton Downey*

Original screen story by Gene Markey

A YOUNG Irish lad gifted with a golden voice is driven from home when his brother falsely accuses him of having stolen

his father's savings. He makes the acquaintance of a press agent who realizes the possibilities of his voice and starts him off on the career of a cabaret singer. His letters to his mother are intercepted by his brother and he remains unhappy despite success. His mother, apparently dying wishes to see him again. His girl has learned of his good fortune and brings him the news of his mother's wish just as he is about to go on at a musical comedy premiere. He leaves the theatre, disregarding the manager's protests, and revives his mother with his songs. She recovers and all ends happily. This sound picture has many song interpolations well done by the star.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—8 reels)

The Rainbow Man

Directed by.....*Fred Newmayer*
Featuring.....*Eddie Dowling*, *Marion Nixon*
Original screen story by Eddie Dowling and James F. Hanley

A SCREEN musical comedy with Eddie Dowling singing. Rainbow Ryan, a minstrel show man, adopts the son of his dead pal. While playing in a small town, Rainbow falls in love with the daughter of the hotel keeper who hates all things connected with the theatre. After the show leaves town the girl discovers that the boy is her dead sister's child and she goes to New York to find him. Rainbow loves her but fearing to marry her against her father's wishes, goes away. Later when he is playing a town near where the girl lives she goes to see him and they are happily re-united.

For family audience including children.

(Sono Art—9 reels)

Saturday's Children

Directed by.....*Gregory La Cava*
Featuring.....*Corinne Griffith*
Play by Maxwell Anderson

ACCORDING to legend "Saturday's child works hard for its living" and such proves to be the fate of our heroine in this romance of the working class. A young girl marries after a glamorous summer courtship and finds herself leaving the outside world to wash dishes, cook and clean house. Being of a romantic nature, she realizes that it was the romance of love that attracted her and that she did not want marriage. Although she and her young husband separate for a while love is stronger than the will to live apart. A human interest story with a punch at the end.

For family audience including young people.

(First National—8 reels)

Scandal

Directed by.....*Wesley Ruggles*
Featuring.....*Laura La Plante*
Story "The Haunted Lady" by Adele Rogers St. John

A SOCIETY drama. A young woman happily married to a wealthy and devoted man becomes involved in an old love affair. Knowing her husband's great aversion to scandal where she is concerned but fascinated by her girlhood sweetheart, she receives him at her home in the absence of her husband. During the time they are together the man's wife is murdered and he is accused. Unwilling to allow any gossip to touch his former sweetheart who is innocent of any wrong, he remains silent and is sentenced. Torn between her duty and the chance of losing her husband's love, the wife finally confesses that she and the accused man were in her garden together at the time of the murder. Unhappy at his wife's silence and fearing the scandal mongers, the husband leaves her but he soon realizes her courage and true worth and all is forgiven.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—7 reels)

The Trial of Mary Dugan

Directed by.....*Bayard Veiller*
Featuring.....*Norma Shearer*, *Lewis Stone*
Play by Bayard Veiller

THIS well-known stage melodrama of a woman on trial for her life for slaying her benefactor is greatly enhanced by the use of the voice in the picture treatment. The scenes take place almost entirely in the courtroom where the incidents of the crime are reenacted from various angles. The brother of the heroine, a young lawyer of small exper-

ience, jumps into the breach and displaces the defending lawyer who subsequently plays an important part in the plot. Miss Norma Shearer, in the role of Mary Dugan, adds to the appeal of the picture by her sympathetic interpretation.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—12 reels)

The Winged Horseman

Directed by.....*Arthur Fosson*
Featuring.....*Hoot Gibson*
Original screen story by Raymond L. Schrock

WESTERN romance of a Texas ranger posing as a tenderfoot. "Sky-Ball" arrives at a ranch on his motorcycle, much to the disgust of the cowboys, to find out the vandals who are trying to force the owner to vacate by bombing his buildings and stock from airplanes. The ranger discovers that the ranch is rich in oil and he soon captures the outlaws and wins the daughter of the ranch owner.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—6 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

Show Boat

(See page 10)

For family audience including young people.

(Universal—13 reels)

The Village of Sin

(See page 5)

For the mature audience.

(Amkino—7 reels)

NON-FEATURES

Foundations of Gold

(Ufa Oddities)

Showing how the gold mines of South Africa are worked by the natives.

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

The Knife

Featuring.....*Lionel Atwill*, *Violet Heming*

Dramatic sketch in which a physician about to operate on a man discovers he is his wife's lover but professional integrity triumphs over jealousy.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—3 reels)

The Leader

(Ufa Oddities)

Life in Swiss villages including the annual spring drive of the cows to their upland pastures.

For family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Melodie

(Technicolor)

A musical episode in the studio of Johannes Bachmann, violin maker.

For family audience including young people.

(Tiffany-Stahl—1 reel)

Moonshine

A clever all talking picture of how a revenue officer gets away from bootleggers who are going to kill him by pretending that he wants to die.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—2 reels)

A Persian Wedding

(Ufa Oddities)

A Persian wedding ceremony and feast followed by views of Persian woman plying their handicrafts.

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

The Richest Street in the World

(Our World Today)

Fifth Avenue past and present; etching President Hoover; water sports.

For family audience including children.

(Educational—1 reel)

Schubert's Friends

Episode in Franz Schubert's life with musical numbers from his works.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Three Aces

(Sportlight Series)

Various champion athletes including a history of Gene Tunney.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Vest Pocket Republics
(World We Live In Series)
Interesting views of San Marino in Italy and of Andorra in the Pyrenees.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

Winning Patterns
(Sportlight Series)
Famous champions in various sports recommended as patterns for beginners to mould themselves upon.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Young Hopefuls
(Sportlight Series)
Showing children and adolescents developing early proficiency in various sports.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

The Bees' Buzz
Farce-comedy elopement and pursuit ending with a swarm of bees who rout all comers.
For family audience including young people.
(Educational—1 reel)

Ghosts
(Mutt and Jeff Cartoon)
An all-talking cartoon of Mutt and Jeff who spend some time in a haunted house.
For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

The Gorno Marionettes
Clever marionettes who play and sing.
For family audience including children.
(International Photoplay Dist.—1 reel)

A Joint Affair
(Krazy Kat Cartoon)
Krazy Kat who dances and plays at a cafe is arrested when hootch is found in his piano.
For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Joy Tonic
Big Boy brings some tonic from a medicine show and gives it to a rich, gouty old man.
(Educational—1 reel)

Ko-Ko's Crib
(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)
Ko-Ko finds himself nursemaid to a baby.
For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Ko-Ko's Hot Ink
(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)
Ko-Ko plays with hot ink and gets burned
For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Mickey's Brown Derby
Mickey and his gang have trouble with a rent collector over their club house.
For family audience including children.
(R K O—2 reels)

On Guard
(Collegians Series)
Calford goes in for ice hockey. Their rivals try to frame them but fail.
For family audience including children.
(Universal—2 reels)

The Rivals
(Collegians Series)
The rivalry between two girls for the first place on Calford's team; they finally learn the team work puts it over and not the individual.
For family audience including children.
(Universal—2 reels)

Stripes and Stars
(Oswald Cartoon)
Oswald-the-Lucky-Rabbit is sent out to get his man.
For family audience including children.
(Universal—1 reel)

FANS who have been attending the talking pictures report that what is needed now by way of censorship is a Commission for the Suppression of Voice.—H. I. Phillips, Sun Dial.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. IV, No. 6 June, 1929

The Front—"She Goes to War" (*see page 7*)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Illusion on the Screen

By Paul Fejos

With the present striving toward greater perfection in the motion picture by the addition of various mechanical improvement it is worth while to consider whether this is the essential development in motion picture progress or whether it is something more intangible which should be the goal. An interesting thought on the subject was presented by Dr. Paul Fejos in a special article for a recent issue of the "New York Times." We wish to acknowledge the courtesy of the "Times" in giving us permission to reprint Dr. Fejos' article.—Editor's Note.

MILLIONS go every night to the motion picture theatres of the world. They go there always seeking the elusive mood of a child listening to a fairy tale; seeking, in other words, the photoplay, which will for a few brief hours lift them out of the monotony of their own humdrum existence into the enchanted realm of make-believe. Children listening to fairy tales imagine themselves to be the Prince Charming or the enchanted Princess of the story, for there begins the endless road that leads to romance. First came the minstrel, then the play and now the motion picture—for all of them are but fairy tales grown up, their tellers and their audiences nothing more than the adult searching for the childhood ideal.

The motion picture has the broadest appeal of all forms of entertainment because of its scope, the biggest stage to play upon. Out here in Hollywood, over in London, Paris or Berlin, we who tell the tales revel in them no less than those who hear and see them, for, after all, the flower of fairyland is in spinning the yarn. Those who listen are necessarily limited by what others have to tell, while those who make them up are bounded only by their imaginations.

And now, as the latest contribution of science to the world of make-believe, we have not only the motion picture at which to look, but the music to hear; not only players to see, but their voices now come to our ears. This new sound picture should be neither of the stage nor of the screen, but quite a different manner of expression, although one somewhere between them.

The future of the talking picture obviously embraces the furthest limits of the screen. For never could an audience be an actual participant of a play upon the screen. The talking picture, however, will in its perfection accomplish the making of the audience a party to the dramatic conflict.

The sound picture, at the present time, is so new as to have no standard whatsoever by which its limitations can be judged. When it is perfected—as in time it undoubtedly will be—it may prove to be so plastic as to be the ideal medium for the picturization of our fairy tales, making them so realistic that they

accomplish to the ultimate the purpose for which they are told. In the audible picture, it is certain, there is no line of demarcation between the characters and the audiences such as is inevitably formed by the footlights of the stage, nor is there the spectre of unreality, or uninterrupted action, such as the titles of a silent picture.

Even in a silent picture, the camera is the audience. What the camera records is the audience's point of view and a picture can be made in such a way that the camera, instead of merely witnessing the action, enters into it.

It is the enormous dynamics of the screen, as compared with the confines of the stage, which should thus enable audiences to participate in the doings of the characters.

Nor is the achievement of this objective a lowly goal for which to strive. For an hour where dreams come true is worth years of strife in the present mad scramble for wealth; nothing could be closer to the pursuit of happiness than the fantasy produced by a few thousand feet of realistic bits of photography.

Talking pictures are a medium characteristic of America, where the prevailing, dominant motive is speed. In Vienna, the atmosphere of Marie Therese still prevails, life tainted with sophistication; in Berlin generals on horses are still the mood. Statues of them everywhere. The talking picture, however, must develop its own technique. There must be new plays, sound pictures even as there were motion-picture plays. The stage play, the musical comedy, the operetta will not fulfill the articulate picture's destiny.

Herein lies the real future of the screen, for the sound picture, whether we welcome or regret it, is here. It has captured the approval of the multitudes.

Of color photography in connection with sound pictures I am inclined at the present stage of development to be skeptical. So far, reality in color has not been approached. The real medium of sound pictures, I believe, is in black and white. As yet color films have only succeeded in transferring the prismatic hues which belong on the teacups to the screen, making of men and women not human beings but painted dolls. That is a start, however.

There is no doubt that the perfect photoplay—perfect mechanically and technically, that is, though not of necessity perfect in illusion, which really is the only perfection—should include in its projection complete naturalness of voice and sound, color and depth. Voice and sound are already so nearly natural that perfection can only be a question of a short time. Color and depth, however, are a different problem. Of them, possibly, the third dimension will be the most difficult to achieve, although it is possible even now to obtain an illustion of depth simply by photographing the principal object beyond a second focusing object, the latter nearer the lens.

In the light of what has already come to pass in the motion picture field, we who make pictures come to discern, dimly perhaps, the perfect picture and to strive toward it as the possibility for an amazing medium of illusion.

FRANCE has a new movie fan in Georges Clemenceau, the war-time Premier. He entered a cinema house recently for the first time in order to witness a film which chronicled daily events of his own life. He was smiling and eager as he entered. "You see I am a bad customer," he remarked. "But I still have time to become a good one." Surrounded by his daughters and grandchildren the venerable Tiger showed childish interest and said he was astounded at the reality of the picture. He pointed eagerly to flowers in his own garden and laughed gleefully when his cook was shown preparing a meal. When the picture was finished he asked that it be re-run.

THE Swiss agricultural film which has been produced by Mme. Gillabertrandin, has obtained success upon its first showing at the Women's Work Exhibition at Berne. The film which is the property of the Women's Federation of the Canton of Vaud, is the work of women, and stands out perhaps as the single exception in the cinematograph industry of the entire production of a film by feminine hands. The length is six thousand meters, and the cost of production has been obtained by public collections made in the Canton of Vaud, under the auspices of the country, Council and local authorities. The film gives a complete idea of Swiss agricultural and rural life, and, in addition to its instructive value, it is a record of the beautiful scenery of the country.

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers who are looking beyond what the popular theatres have to offer.

SECRETARY

ALFRED B. KUTTNER

EDITORS

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
WILTON A. BARRETT

The Valiant

Directed by .....*William K. Howard*
Photographed by .....*Lucien Andriot, Glen MacWilliams*

The Cast

James Dyke .....*Paul Muni*
Mary Douglas .....*Marguerite Churchill*
Warden .....*DeWitt Jennings*
Judge .....*Henry Kolker*
Mrs. Douglas .....*Edith Yorke*
Chaplain .....*Richard Carlyle*
Robert Ward .....*John Mack Brown*

From the play by Robert Middlemass and Holsworthy Hall

THE VALIANT again shows the progress which the talking picture is making towards presenting audible drama on the screen with all the emotional force with which the stage achieves its effect when it tells a story by means of the living actor and his voice.

The play upon which this picture is based was originally a one act sketch which ran about thirty minutes. It enjoyed a sensational success both in the little theatres and on the vaudeville stage. Essentially melodramatic in the legitimate sense of that word, it was based upon situation rather than character or strict plausibility. But that situation, involving a mysterious murderer about to be executed who denies his identity to his younger sister in order to save her and their mother the shame of being associated with him, was so intense that it kept criticism in abeyance and thus achieved the very effect for which good melodrama always strives without the added effort of completely satisfying drama. The sister, much younger than her brother and not sure of his identity, had counted upon breaking through his denial (if he were really her brother) by evoking his childhood memories of her, especially through the recital of the good night scene from "Romeo and Juliet" which they used to repeat to each other when he came to bid her good night. He professes ignorance of these lines, successfully rebuffs her and sends her home to her mother with the consoling fiction that their lost son and brother died a heroic death during the War. After she has left he recites the missing lines, thus revealing to the audience that he is really the man.

About this same situation the picture is faithfully and honestly built with the same unhappy though exalted ending and with, of course, the details that went before and after filled in with the added license which the roving camera enjoys over the stage.

The picture opens with the hero, having just shot a man in a squalid tenement, walking through the streets and giving himself up

Marguerite Churchill and Paul Muni in "The Valiant"

Scene from "The Valiant"

at the nearest police station. We do not see the actual shooting but hear the report of the pistol and then see the man walking slowly out of the house and into the street where the casual noises of traffic and hurdy gurdies and children at play drown out the portentiousness of the murder that has just taken place. An apparently swift trial, of which we witness only the passing of the sentence, lands the hero in the state prison with the date for his execution set. The prisoner has asked for no mercy except the veiling of his identity, as to which he himself steadfastly refuses to give any clue.

We then swing back to the man's home town in Ohio where we see his mother and his sister and learn something of his early life before he left home. The mother, who has read his story in the papers and seen poorly reproduced newspaper photographs of him, has a persistent feeling that he may be her son, but her health precludes her undertaking the journey so that her daughter volunteers to go, accompanied by her fiance. Here the picture, partly silent, reverts to a cinematic technique, showing flash-back scenes of the hero and his younger sister in their charming companionship.

Now we enter the warden's room a few hours before the execution. Here screen and stage practically coalesce, for the actors in both mediums work upon our emotions by voice and gesture and expression in order to get their effect. Here therefore the picture is entirely in the hands of the actors and the line of demarcation between stage and screen temporarily disappears. From the point of view of the motion picture the screen does what the stage can do, the stage has no advantage over the screen if we accept the convention of flat shadows instead of flesh and blood personalities. Motion picture audiences already used to that convention will find it less obtrusive than drama audiences who still have to make a certain adjustment in this respect. But even here, in the very midst of an apparent equalization of stage and screen, with the balance slightly in favor of the stage, the camera merely reporting and the motion picture director merely acting as coach, cinematic superiority manifests itself when the hero spins the fiction of a heroic death for

himself and makes that fiction vivid to the audience by letting the camera tell it for him in terms of the past and distant battlefield. The spoken drama cannot do this; it cannot leave the stage.

In the final scene, though a let-down from the tense drama preceding it, there occurs another eloquent, if somewhat conventional, cinematic moment. The mother thinks of her dead son but thinks of him dead as an honorable soldier as the camera causes a ghostly line of marching men to tramp inaudibly through the spaces of her mind.

Paul Muni and Marguerite Churchill bear the burden of the acting. To Miss Churchill we are grateful for having presented that rare thing on our screen, a thoroughly real, unpretentious American girl, delightfully lacking in self-consciousness and yet sensitive and fine of feeling as we would like to have her be. Her interpretation of the heroine is skillfully shaded and at all times full of dignity. Paul Muni who has apparently given up a promising career on the stage after attracting unusual attention, registers with arresting strength on the screen. We venture the guess that on the silent screen his success might not have been so immediate. For he looks like a great actor rather than a handsome one. And the fullness of his power is quite evidently bound up with the quality of his voice. It is deep and well pitched, remarkably eloquent in short phrases, and short phrases are predominant in the talking technique of the screen. His interpretation is concentrated and restrained with a suggestion of emotional reserve which makes him an arresting presence on the screen. It will be interesting to see what he will be able to do in a part of greater range and flexibility.

The repeated use of the two Shakespeare quotations from "Romeo and Juliet" invites an interesting discussion of the function of poetic speech in talking pictures. There are new possibilities here. Certainly both

> "Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow
> That I shall say good night till it be morrow."

and the answering

> "Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!
> Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!"

could not very well have been used as titles in a silent picture. They would have been too long and too involved, with their flavor of literary quotation sticking out all over them, and with the danger of drawing snickers from the irreverent. The audience would merely have read them without putting the proper emotional expression behind them. Here, spoken by the actors in the full tide of an emotional climax, they proved to be singularly moving and effective. In the talking picture there is perhaps room for the poet and the master of literary expression such as the silent picture, in which literature was never more than a disturbing intruder, could never provide.

Produced and distributed by Fox Film Corp.

She Goes to War

Directed by .....*Henry King*
Photographed by .....*Tony Gaudio*

The Cast

Joan .....*Eleanor Boardman*
Tom Pike .....*John Holland*
Reggie .....*Edmund Burns*
Rosie .....*Alma Rubens*
Bill .....*Al St. John*
Katie .....*Glen Walters*
Tom's mother .....*Margaret Seddon*

From the novel by Rupert Hughes

SHE GOES TO WAR is based upon a war romance from the indefatigable pen of Mr. Rupert Hughes in which he draws a picture of women's part in the great conflict and at the same time draws the lesson that war is the great leveler of all social distinctions. The heroine, Joan Morant, a small town snob, finds that the pretentious gentleman to whom she is engaged has a liberal dose of the yellow streak and comes to realize the true worth of Tom Pike, a young filling station clerk, who turns out to be a real leader of men. She herself arrives at the front with rather exalted notions about heroic service only to find that work in a canteen is a matter of democratic drudgery where maid and mistress have to sink their social differences. Accidentally propelled into a stiff bit of military action while in the disguise of a military uniform, she gets a taste of what war is really like and proves that she is made of heroic stuff.

Tanks Going Into Action—"She Goes to War"

She Goes to War is a synchronized sound picture with only an occasional song and talking sequence. The sound effects are particularly impressive in the latter part where they are employed in lending added realism to a prolonged military action. Tom's company has been assigned the task of capturing an important hill. They advance upon the apparently unprotected position until they are suddenly subjected to a liquid fire attack which temporarily routs them. Packed into enormous tanks they succeed in passing through this zone of fire only to find themselves again held up by a machine gun which commands the entire side of the hill.

These battle scenes, occupying the last three reels, form the climax of the picture. They involved the use of sound recording devices in the open on a large scale and produce a unique effect. The whistling and screaming of shells, the rattle of machine gun fire, the roar of the flames and the rumbling of the ponderous tanks add greatly to the realism of the action. These scenes were taken at Fort Leonard Wood, Maryland, under the supervision of army experts. The unusually large tanks, apparently capable of holding fifteen or more men beside the driver and the gunners, are evidently of the latest design. Incidentally the photography of these scenes showing the troops in action over a wide area of rolling country, advancing in the night or just before the break of dawn, is unusually fine.

It is in these sequences that the exceptional quality of *She Goes to War* is to be found. They undoubtedly foreshadow a picture to come in which a battle scene on a large scale with full sound and voice effects will enable the screen to depict war in all its terror and emotional appeal. The rest of *She Goes to War* is above the average screen entertainment with due allowance for fictional license and special emphasis upon the rough and ready humor of war time days.

Produced by Inspiration Pictures. Distributed by United Artists.

Broadway

Directed by ..... *Dr. Paul Fejos*
Photographed by ..... *Paul Mohr*

The Cast

Roy Lane ..... *Glenn Tryon*
Billie Moore ..... *Merna Kennedy*
Pearl ..... *Evelyn Brent*
Dan McCorn ..... *Thomas E. Jackson*
Steve Randall ..... *Robert Ellis*
Nic Verdis ..... *Paul Porcasi*
"Porky" Thompson ..... *Otis Harlan*
Scar Edwards ..... *Leslie Fenton*

From the play by Philip Dunning and George Abbot

PAUL FEJOS' latest production, the screen adaptation in talkie of the stage success "Broadway," preserves much of that vehicle's melodramatic tenseness particularly where the parts are left in the hands of the original cast. Characteristically, Dr. Fejos has not been content merely to photograph and phonofilm a play of the theatre, but has introduced as far as he could cinematic fabric to hold the dialogue to the motion picture pattern. This has resulted in one gain of the screen version over the stage version, which it otherwise follows very closely in every respect of plot and character delineation: the cabaret, from the spectators' angle, has been elaborated for the audience of the film, and in providing this pictorial background, from the front stage view through the use of the cabaret actors in their various numbers, a kind of chorus has been found to contrast with the events of the drama transpiring in the back rooms of Nic Verdis' resort. But this is a little overworked, perhaps, in the effort to justify the very elaborate and interesting set showing the modernistic main floor and balconies of the Paradise Club, because the tenseness of the situation developing behind the scenes is sometimes slackened by taking the camera out front too frequently to show Glenn Tryon and Merna Kennedy in their roles of Roy Lane and Billie Moore conducting their acts with the hard-boiled chorus. We believe that in this particular the drama could be tightened up and kept taut by judicious cutting.

The Camera Crane used in the shooting of "Broadway"

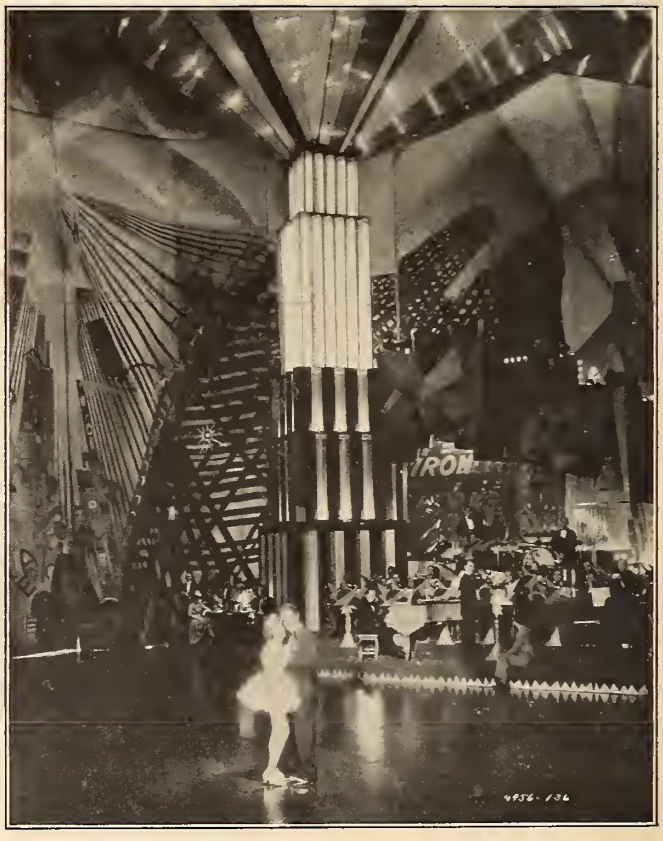
Throughout the film the sound dialogue and accompaniments seem unusually clear and satisfying, especially when the actors of the original cast and Evelyn Brent are speaking. It seems to us that the outstanding performance in this interesting and carefully produced film is that of Miss Brent, although those of Robert Ellis, Thomas E. Jackson and Paul Porcasi are all excellent.

But the most important thing about this production from the standpoint of its use of sound is that it does combine this element with the older invention of the silent screen in such a way as to retain, at least in part, the mobility and visual fascination of the latter in a way that again points to the ever increasing improvement of the sound and dialogue film. Dr. Fejos should be a leader in this field, just as in his earlier picture *The Last Moment* he proved himself a leader in the field of silent films. It is to his pictorial sense and knowledge of the cinematic use of the camera that *Broadway* gains its best distinction.

Produced and distributed by Universal Pictures Corp.

IRIS BARRY, a writer for three large London dailies and a motion picture critic of a motion picture generation, writes in *The Film Mercury,* "One of the distinguishing marks of the film is its unruliness, its power to soar beyond all limits of possibility, to depict the passage of years, to step over oceans and mountain ranges, to double back on itself and show what happened before the action commenced, to interpolate dreams and fantastic sequences. But at the same time all the various elements are made more or less successfully to cohere, if only because there are no actual breaks in a film such as you get in a play—no 'acts' or intervals."

PASSENGERS on a commercial air liner witnessed a movie show recently for the first time in the fast-developing history of aviation. It was in the darkened cabin of a tri-motored Universal Air Line plane on its regular run from Minneapolis and St. Paul to Chicago.



Glenn Tryon and Merna Kennedy in a Cabaret Scene from the picture "Broadway"

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensns of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
FRANCES C. BARRETT

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

*—*Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

Berlin After Dark

Directed by.....*Constantin J. David*
Featuring .....*Grita Ley*

Story by Victor Abel and Alfred Zeisler

A BAFFLING murder mystery. The owner of a Berlin amusement park is killed when he remains at night to go over his accounts. He had forbidden his daughter to associate with a certain young man and the young man had threatened to get even. Suspicion therefore points to the youth but the police are suspicious also of a man from the underworld who had been at the park that day and had had an argument. Before the real murderer is found out however the daughter and two others are implicated. The boy and girl are freed following the girl's fight to save them. This interesting combination of romance and mystery was made at the Ufa studios in Berlin and was thus played against the actual locale of the story.

For family audience including young people.

(World Wide—7 reels)

The Black Watch

Directed by.....*John Ford*
Featuring..... *Victor McLaglen*, *Myrna Loy*

Novel "King of the Khyber Rifles" by Talbot Mundy

THE hero of this picturesque war romance is an honored member of the "Black Watch," a crack Scottish regiment, to which his family has belonged for generations. Just as the regiment is about to go to the French front he is called upon to fulfill a secret mission in India for which his long service there and his acquaintance with the language has fitted him. His abrupt demand for a transfer to the Indian service looks like a case of slacking so he leaves under a cloud. In India he is confronted with the problem of penetrating into the Himalayas and counteracting a dangerous movement among the tribes to descend upon the country, now left defenseless by the departure of the British regiments for the Western front. The fanatic tribesmen are led by a woman whom they revere almost as a goddess. She falls in love with the hero and he, fascinated by her exotic charm, is torn between love and duty. He finally succeeds in getting control of the arms and ammunition supply and prevails upon her to appeal to her followers not to attack. They answer by shooting her down but are in turn routed by a handful of English officers armed with machine guns. The hero returns to his regiment and is acclaimed by his brother officers. The picture is beautifully photographed and many of the sound effects are impressive.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—9 reels)

Bulldog Drummond

Directed by ..... *F. Richard Jones*
Featuring ..... *Ronald Colman*

Novel by "Sapper"

A MYSTERY play with the scenes laid in and near London. Bored with civil life after the World War, a young English officer known as "Bulldog" advertises for adventure. His advertisement is answered by a charming and youthful lady, who desires his help in an attempt to free her uncle from an insane asylum, where he is being forcibly kept by persons desiring his wealth. After many thrilling experiences, the young man finally kidnaps the uncle from the asylum, thereby winning the girl's love and the gratefulness of her uncle. Fine photography marks this picture which presents Ronald Colman, the romantic actor, in the new role of a melodramatic hero.

For family audience including young people.
(United Artists—9 reels)

The Cocoanuts

Directed by ..... *Joseph Stanley* / *Robert Florey*
Featuring ..... *The Four Marx Brothers*

Play by George Kaufman

A MUSICAL comedy featuring six popular Broadway stars, Mary Eaton and Oscar Shaw in addition to the Marx Brothers. A hotel keeper in a Florida boom town has a hard time getting along. He tries selling lots but fails to make money through the efforts of a half-wit who attempts to help him. A valuable necklace is stolen from his hotel and he is involved in the theft, but the matter is finally cleared up satisfactorily. Good comedy and excellent music are provided in this stage production transferred to the screen.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—10 reels)

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* The Desert Song

Directed by ..... *Roy del Ruth*
Featuring ..... *John Boles* / *Carlotta King*

Operetta by Otto Harbach and Oscar Hammerstein II

AN ambitious singing and talking picture which succeeds in putting this popular operetta on the screen in its entirety with the addition of a real desert locale. The story tells of the adventures of a modern Robin Hood who leads the Riff tribesmen against their oppressors. He is known and feared as "The Red Shadow." But he is really the son of the Commandant of the French troops garrisoned in the desert and when he is at the fort he acts as if he were weak minded, to the despair of his father. He is in love with the girl who is engaged to one of the officers but who is romantically interested in the mysterious "Red Shadow." He carries her off into the desert where he is pursued by his father who does not yet know of his identity. He refuses to fight a duel with his father and is branded as a coward, thereby losing his leadership over the Riffs. Thus he ends his career as the "Red Shadow" but wins the girl and the respect of his father when the latter learns his identity.

John Boles and Carlotta King lend excellent voices to their parts and the picture abounds with fine desert shots.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—13 reels)

Father and Son

Directed by ..... *M. C. Kemton*
Featuring ..... *Jack Holt*

Story by Elmer Harris

DRAMA of a man's love for his small son. On a business trip to Paris a young widower becomes entangled with an adventuress. Believing in her, they marry and he brings her home to his son. She soon shows her true character by mistreating the boy, and blaming him for something he did not do. Later when a man, formerly in her life, arrives and kills her, both the father and the boy try to take the blame but a record on a recording phonograph that the man had given his son, tells the true story and the guilty one is brought to justice. Then the man for the first time realizes that the young woman who lives next door and whom his son adores, is the one to be his wife, so the three are happily brought together.

For family audience including young people.
(Columbia—7 reels)

Fox Movietone Follies of 1929

Directed by ..... *David Butler*, *Marcel Silver*

Featuring ..... *Sue Carol*, *Lola Lane*, *John Breedon*, *Stepin Fetchit*

Original screen story by William K. Wells

THIS picture continues the experiment of putting musical comedy on the screen with a reproduction of most of the major stage effects which usually accompany it. Only, thanks to the freedom of movement of the camera, we see here both sides of the stage and learn of the drama that is taking place behind the wings. The show is about to go on but the money has run out and the creditors are in a threatening mood. The hero has come North to marry his girl and is shocked to find her in the chorus. She refuses to give up her stage career so he buys a controlling interest in the show and endeavors as her boss to fire her. He is soon in hot water trying to manage the show so as not to lose his money. We now see the various numbers and watch how the audience receives them. In the end of course the show goes over big, especially when the heroine jumps in to take the place of the temperamental star who goes on strike.

There are a series of entertaining musical and dance numbers with chorus, and Stepin Fetchit, the negro comedian, supplies some excellent humor as the porter of the theatre who refuses to let anything hurry him.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—9 reels)

From Headquarters

Directed by ..... *Howard Bretherton*

Featuring ..... *Monte Blue*

Original screen story by Samuel Hartridge

A MELODRAMA of the United States Marines. A character known as "Happy" Smith has for several years led a somewhat vagrant life in the lazy atmosphere of a Latin American Republic but through fighting now and then with various rebel leaders he has learned to know the country. He is therefore hired to guide a small group of Marines inland to rescue a party of lost Americans. In spite of the doubts of the officers as to his honesty he proves faithful and although innumerable hardships overtake the little band "Happy" comes through to glory and in the doing of it his personal affairs become righted so that no longer is he under a cloud of suspicion. The story is improbable but with Marines as the brave heroes perhaps the audience will not be too critical.

For family audience including young people.

(Warner—7 reels)

The Glad Rag Doll

Directed by ..... *Michael Curtiz*

Featuring ..... *Dolores Costello*

Original screen story by Harvey Gates

AN amusing comedy in which a show girl gives a snobbish family a lesson in good manners and morals. The youngest son has fallen in love with her and his family, headed by the elder brother, sets out to rescue him from the siren. She turns the tables on them by outshining them socially and by discovering their various weaknesses. The older brother, at first angered and defeated, later falls in love with her, supplanting the younger brother who had been only suffering from a bad case of calf love. The picture has a number of talking sequences.

For family audience including young people.

(Warner—8 reels)

Hard Boiled Rose

Directed by ..... *F. Harmon Weight*

Featuring ..... *Myrna Loy*, *William Collier, Jr.*

Original screen story by Melville Crosman

A ROMANCE laid in New Orleans. About to lose his fortune and his good name the head of an old family commits suicide. His daughter, a young and innocent girl just home from school, in order to gain possession of certain papers plays the part of an adventuress who has come from Paris to the famous gambling house of Julie Malo in New Orleans. As "Hard Boiled Rose" the young girl succeeds in winning the confidence of the gambling house owner's ne'er-do-well son, and thus in securing the papers which will keep her father's name unsullied.

For family audience including young people.

(Warner—6 reels)

His Lucky Day

Directed by ..... *Eddie Cline*
Featuring ..... *Reginald Denny*

Original screen story by John B. Clymer

AN amusing comedy-drama. In order to dispose of a property to a wealthy man and thus win his daughter, a young real estate agent must first rent the house next door. Suddenly an automobile drives up before the door and the youth immediately sings the praises of the house to the occupants. He does not know that they are crooks escaping from the police. They are glad to use the old house to hide in and the youth is anxious to rent, so a bargain is struck. The newcomers make a call on their neighbors and while there steal all the man's valuable art objects. That night the young man plays ghost in the house rented by the crooks and later the police come and arrest them. In the meantime the bill of sale has been signed by the father and so the young people are happy.

For family audience including young people.
(Universal—6 reels)

Kid Gloves

Directed by ..... *Ray Enright*
Featuring ..... *Conrad Nagel*, *Lois Wilson*

Original screen story by Fred Myton

AN underworld melodrama. "Kid Gloves" Smith, a hi-jacker, is framed by the leader of a bootlegging gang and forced to marry a wealthy girl to whom the leader had been engaged but whom he believes unfaithful to him. The girl is innocent of the man's accusation, but she is made to accept the hi-jacker as a husband. Disowned by her wealthy aunt the girl and the hi-jacker lead an honest life of poverty. He is framed again and nearly killed but escapes and they realize that they have learned to love one another. There is plenty of excitement in the picture put over by a good cast.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—7 reels)

Kitty

Directed by ..... *Richard Saville*
Featuring ..... *John Stuart*, *Estelle Brody*

Novel by Warwick Deeping

A WORLD War romance. About to leave for the front, a young English officer, son of a wealthy and proud woman, marries the daughter of a tobacconist. Returning from the war, paralyzed and unable to walk, the young man is kept in his mother's home and is prevented from seeing his wife, about whom his mother has given him false reports. The girl, Kitty, meanwhile has bought a lovely inn and has fixed it up as a tea room. One day while the young man is motoring he sends his chauffeur and his attendant into a hotel and according to secret arrangements his wife kidnaps him. Later she plans a ruse in order to make her paralyzed husband walk. The plan works and his mother relenting, they are all happy. The picture is an English production and many of the scenes were photographed with the beautiful Thames river as a background.

For family audience including young people.
(World Wide—9 reels)

The Man I Love

Directed by ..... *William A. Wellman*
Featuring ..... *Mary Brian*, *Richard Arlen*

Original screen story by Herman Mankiewicz

A ROMANCE of the prize ring. In love with a young fighter a girl marries him and they go to New York to live. There a fascinating adventuress turns the husband's head and he devotes his time to her. Not until his wife leaves him does he realize how much she meant to him. During a fight for the championship it seems as though dissipation would cause his defeat but learning that his wife is staying in town for the fight he determines to win, and over the radio at the end of the fight he sends a message to her that he is giving up the fight game for good.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

No Defense

Directed by ..... *Lloyd Bacon*
Featuring ..... *Monte Blue*

Original screen story by J. Raleigh Davis

UPON the completion of an important railroad bridge, the wealthy owner, his son, who is a junior member of the firm, and

his daughter come west for the opening ceremonies. A romance developes between the young construction engineer and the daughter but is quickly ended, as are all the hopes of the engineer, when the bridge gives way at the trial. Later it is proved that inferior material had been used. The young engineer knows who is to blame for the inferior material but remains quiet. When the son confesses his guilt, the young engineer is reinstated in the affections of the girl.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—7 reels)

The Studio Murder Mystery

Directed by ..... *Frank Tuttle*
Featuring ..... *Neil Hamilton*, *Doris Hill*

Magazine serial by A. Channing and Carmen Edington

HERE is a well worked out mystery story given added interest through its setting in a motion picture studio. A young actor is killed one night while working late. Five people who were on the set that night are implicated in the murder. After questioning, four are allowed to go and the young daughter of the night watchman is accused and sentenced. Her sweetheart solves the problem however, and brings the real murderer to justice.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

This Is Heaven

Directed by ..... *Alfred Santell*
Featuring ..... *Vilma Banky*, *James Hall*

Original screen story by Arthur Mantel

VILMA BANKY appears in her first talking picture as a beautiful immigrant girl who comes to this country and soon gets a job at the griddle stand of a popular chain of restaurants. Sent out to a society fair to preside over a griddle she falls in love with a young man whom she takes for a chauffeur while he thinks she is one of the guests. He follows her and finds out who she really is but continues to court her, assuming the role of a taxi driver in order to see whether she loves him for his own sake. He successfully keeps his identity hidden until the last moment when he leads her into the richly appointed house which he has bought for her. The role of the girl is one which shows Vilma Banky's talents to good advantage.

For family audience including young people.
(United Artists—8 reels)

Under the Southern Cross

Directed by ..... *Lew Collins*
Photographed by ..... *Wilfred M. Cline*, *Harold Smith*

A SYNCHRONIZED picture depicting native life in the wild country of New Zealand. Two tribes separated by a volcano which they call "evil spirit" are united through the marriage of the daughter of one tribe and the son of the other. But before this comes about the course of love does not run smoothly, for in an athletic contest staged to see who will win the girl the one she loves loses. He however will not give her up so easily and this leads to a war between the tribes. The scene of the climax of the fighting at the mouth of the crater is remarkable and there are many beautiful and thrilling shots.

For family audience including children.
(Universal—7 reels)

Where East is East

Directed by ..... *Tod Browning*
Featuring ..... *Lon Chaney*

Original screen story by Tod Browning and Harry Sinclair Drago

THIS picture laid in Indo-China opens very excitingly with a tiger stalking into the center of the scene where it is caught in a huge net. The next sequence shows Lon Chaney as one of the manipulators of the net in a tree nearby. This is the introduction to a man called "Tiger," a trapper of wild animals who bears many scars, the marks of his trade. None of the fierceness of the man is apparent, however, when he is at home with his daughter upon whom he lavishes all his affection. When she falls in love with the son of an American circus owner who comes to deal with him he has a difficult time to reconcile himself to the situation, but as the young man has proved his love and also his bravery by defending the girl from one of the tigers which escapes, he gives his blessing. The appearance of a mysterious Oriental-like

woman affects the lives of all three. She it is who by her action in years past has been responsible for the attitude of the "Tiger" toward love and when she endeavors by her wiles to wreck the happiness of his daughter he resorts to an unusual method of wreaking vengeance on her through one of his animals which has a particular dislike for her. This siren part is played by Estelle Taylor in a make-up nearly as startling as that often used by Mr. Chaney.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—7 reels)

The Woman in White

Directed by .....Herbert Wilcox
Featuring .....Blanche Sweet
Novel by Wilkie Collins

ROMANCE and mystery blended in an English production filmed in Scotland. A girl parted from her sweetheart is forced to marry a man whom she does not like or trust. She goes to live in his gloomy house and there she is warned by a mysterious woman in white not to sign certain papers. This mystery woman is killed and the young wife, substituted in her place, finds herself living as the mystery woman confined in an insane asylum. She escapes and with the help of her sweetheart the records from the church are found which prove the relationship between the girl and the woman in white and solve the mystery of the house of crime. The girl's husband is killed through his own evil deed and the girl is free to marry the man she loves. Miss Sweet gives a fine portrayal.

For family audience including young people.

World Wide—7 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

Broadway

(See page 9)

For the mature audience.

(Universal—10 reels)

She Goes to War

(See page 7)

For family audience including young people.

(United Artists—10 reels)

The Valiant

(See page 5)

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—6 reels)

NON-FEATURES

After the Round-Up

Cowboys in song numbers.

For family audience including children.

(Warner—1 reel)

Austria

The spirit of Austria in picture and music.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

The Azure Coast

(World We Live In Series)

Scenic of Nice, Monaco and Monte Carlo.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Conditioning

(Sportlight Series)

The necessity of getting into condition in various sports.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Crystal Champions

(Sportlight Series)

Beautiful pictures of swimming and diving in Crystal Lake with outstanding under water photography.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Fish and Feathers

(Sportlight Series)

Fishing and bird shooting interestingly photographed.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Lerdo's Mexican Orchestra

Mexican orchestra in pleasing selections.

For family audience including children.

(Warner—1 reel)

The Light of India

Historical incident of the Sepoy mutiny in India during 1857 interestingly done in color.

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Magic Sands

(World We Live In Series)

Fascinating scenes of desert lands.

For family audience including children.

(Fox—1 reel)

The One Man Glee Club

Frank Crummit sings a group of popular songs.

For family audience including young people.

(Warner—1 reel)

The Passing Show of Perak

(World We Live In Series)

Scenic of the Sultan of Perak (Malay Peninsula) and his court.

For family audience including children.

(Educational—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 1

(Pathe Audio Reviews are entirely sound, some of the subjects have appeared in former Pathe Reviews, hence the repetition.)

Cowboy—rope tricks of the great West by kid experts; Europe—a complete tour in five easy minutes.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 2

Voyageur—adventure of the singing waters of the Mississauga; Nathalia Crane—Brooklyn's prodigy poetess; Bal Taberin—the world famous cafe of gay Montmartre.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 3

Faces; Pepita—the lady with the castanets in sunny Mexico; Dear Paris.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 4

Wheat—the grain fields of the Canadian West; Make-Up; Ebony.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 5

Round-Up—man's most noble friend, the fast vanishing horse; Hicks! Don Dickerman's County Fair provides rural whoopee for the hayseeds of New York.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 6

Dobbin—the old fashioned buggy ride as done by the marionettes; Riding the Sky Trail; Chic—the newest novelties in the marts of feminine fashion.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 7

Brass—various pieces of art, futuristic and otherwise; Harry Foster Welsh and his fifty piece orchestra; First Screen Debate—Florida vs. California.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 20

Exotic Brass; Fish and Feathers; Florida vs. California.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 21

Old Madrid; Riding the Sky Trail; Chic.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 22

The Moose and the Tenderfoot; the Cockatoo; Tabloid Africa.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 23

Lulworth Cove, England; Days of Yesteryear; Wild Geese.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 24

Spring Pastoral; Chili Pepper Industry; Ahoy! Over the Bounding Main.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 25

Jewels; Drama of the Microscopic World; Cathedral of St. John the Divine; Pearl Culture.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Schubert's Masterpiece

Inspired by love for a beautiful girl Schubert composes his masterpiece.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Tajado's Tipico Orchestra

Mexican orchestra—ensemble and solo selections.

For family audience including children.

(Warner—1 reel)

Turf and Sail

(Sportlight Series)

Beautiful scenes of various forms of yachting including power boats and sail. Excellent photography.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Water Wonders

(Sportlight Series)

Teaching the young to swim.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

West of the Golden Gate

Colored scenic of Hawaii showing many lovely flowers.

For family audience including children.

(Tiffany-Stahl—1 reel)

The Year

Beautiful pictorial cycle of the four seasons.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Dear Teacher

Comedy skit of a school.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—2 reels)

Gorno Marionettes No. 2

Clever acrobatic marionettes.

For family audience including children.

(International—1 reel)

Helter Skelter

Big Boy tries to sell his dog in order to help his mother who is in need of money.

For family audience including children.

(Educational—2 reels)

Hurdy Gurdy

Slapstick. A picture of life on the fire escape of a tenement on a hot day.

For family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

If Men Played Cards as Women Do

Unusually clever skit of four men who meet to play cards but like the so-called weaker sex they stay to gossip.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—1 reel)

It Happened to Him

Song number opening with James Barton being arrested and showing how he extricates himself in order to get to the theatre on time.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Junior Luck

(Collegians Series)

The Calfard students become spirited advocates for winter sports.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

Ko-Ko's Crib

(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko finds himself nursemaid to a baby.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Ko-Ko's Hot Ink

(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko plays with hot ink and burns himself.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Ko-Ko's Knockdown

(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko throws his hat in the prize fighting ring.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Ko-Ko's Saxaphonies

(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko's slumber is disturbed by the wailing of a saxaphone.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Ko-Ko's Signals

(Out-of-the-Inkwell Cartoon)

Ko-Ko aspires to join the legion of the "Four Horsemen."

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Loan Shark

(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat falls in love with a hula-hula dancer and learns to be quite adept himself.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Midnight Frolic

Eddie Cantor gives a few of his ideas on making "whoopee" from the Ziegfeld attraction of that name.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Rough Dried

A slapstick comedy in which Billy Dooley goes to call on his sister who leaves him to look after the house with dire results.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—2 reels)

Sheep Skinned

(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat in a version of Little Red Riding Hood.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Small Talk

Our Gang in an all talking comedy. They find themselves in an orphan asylum but they are all adopted.

For family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—3 reels)

Torrid Toreadors

(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat waves the red cloak.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Unaccustomed As We Are

Slapstick—the husband brings his friend home for supper but his wife makes him regret it.

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

The Wicked West

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald goes West and beats the bear at checkers.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—1 reel)

Ye Old Melodies

Comedy song numbers.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

THE National Board has recently seen the second picture produced in Armenia to be shown in this country. It is a tragedy of a girl who is afflicted with epilepsy, and is believed to have the evil spirit and is thus ostracized from her family. The picture interestingly portrays certain habits and beliefs of the Armenians. It is titled *Evil Spirits* and is distributed by the American Committee to Aid Armenia.

AN unusual production has just been completed in Switzerland in *The World of the Automaton*. It traces the evolution of the automaton from the automatic gods made by the ancient Egyptians, passing in its survey the famous clocks of Berne and the automatic marvels of the Black Forest, down to the wonders of the present day. The traveling and research which was necessary to complete the film were great, but the result in its hypnotic charm and beauty is, according to all accounts, ample justification. The Geneva presentation was made with an entertaining and ingenious musical setting.

"I'VE half a mind to go into the movies," said Alice.

"That's all you need!" said the Red Queen. —*Movie Makers.*

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

MRS. ROBERT C. HEFLEBOWER, a member of the Better Films National Council of the National Board and Chairman of Motion Pictures of the National League of American Pen Women is closely in touch with all that concerns motion pictures. She spoke against the Johnson Bill, which has been introduced in the Ohio Legislature, providing for additional censorship of motion pictures at the meeting of the Cincinnati branch of the Ohio Newspaper Women's Association. The following quotation shows another of her interests. "One of the most entertaining and successful junior matinees sponsored by the Hyde Park Mother's Club of Cincinnati, was that given with Douglas Fairbanks in *The Thief of Bagdad* as the attraction. Every seat in the house was taken and it was found expedient to give a second performance to accommodate the large group of young folks who came later, many of them accompanied by their elders who enjoyed the performance as much as did the youngsters. The pictures for these junior matinees are selected under the supervision of Mrs. Robert C. Heflebower, who as Better Motion Picture Council chairman, originated the regular every Saturday junior matinees here five years ago, with the fine cooperation of Mr. Charles Weigel, manager of the Park Theatre, and which have been a happy feature of Hyde Park's young folks entertainment during the past years."

The new President of the Better Motion Picture Council for the coming year is Mrs. Irene Sullivan. The annual report of the Program Chairman, Miss Dorothy Fulton, showed a year of interesting programs, among them a talk on "Foreign Films" by Miss Julia Walsh; a luncheon with an address on "Patriotic and Educational Films" by Mrs. Charles F. Johnson, State Chairman of the Better Films Committee of the Ohio State D. A. R.; a talk on "Children's Matinees" given by Miss Dora Stecker; a luncheon at which Dr. John L. Clifton, State Director of Education, discussed "Censorship of Films."

MRS. EDWARD H. JACOBS, Chairman of Motion Pictures of the Los Angeles District of the California Federation of Women's Clubs and Film Review Chairman of the General Federation is at present on a trip in the east. During the six years of her interest in motion picture activity Mrs. Jacobs has accomplished a most constructive piece of better films work.

The Junior Matinee with suitable pictures for children was the nucleus of her program and still forms the chief purpose of the review and publication activity conducted by the Federation. The results in California have been widespread. Mrs. Jacobs says that the theatre managers are most cooperative in working with the club women of the various communities in initiating and maintaining weekly Junior Matinees throughout the year.

It was a great pleasure to those gathered at a luncheon given by the National Board of Review at which Mrs. Jacobs was the guest of honor to hear her tell of her work. The luncheon was held at the Hotel Roosevelt, June 6th with a number of members of the Executive Board, Better Films Council and General Committee of the National Board gathered to greet Mrs. Jacobs. Among the guests were Dr. Walter W. Pettit, Director Department of Community Work, New York School of Social Work, member Executive Committee, National Board of Review; Mr. Lee F. Hanmer, Director, Department of Recreation, Russell Sage Foundation, formerly member General Committee, National Board of Review; Mrs. E. H. Cahill, Motion Picture Chairman, National Federation of Music Clubs; Dr. George W. Kirchwey, Department of Criminology, New York School of Social Work, member Better Films National Council; Mrs. Newton D. Chapman, Better Films Chairman, National Society, D. A. R., member Better Films National Council; Dr. Louis I. Harris, former New York City Commissioner of Health, member, Executive Committee, National Board of Review; Col. Clarence A. Perry, Associate

Director, Department of Recreation, Russell Sage Foundation, member General and Exceptional Photoplays Committees, National Board of Review; Mrs. Harry G. Grover, President, Rutherford (N. J.), Better Films Committee, member Executive Board and Council, Better Films National Council; Judge John R. Davies, Attorney-at-Law, former Judge of Seventh District, Municipal Court of Manhattan, member General Committee, National Board of Review; Mr. George J. Zehrung, Director, Motion Picture Bureau, International Committee of Y. M. C. A.'s, member Executive Committee, National Board of Review; Mrs. Everett B. Heymann, Recreation Committee, Women's City Club, New York City, member General Committee, National Board of Review; Mrs. Lewis S. Booth, Membership Committee, National Board of Review; Mr. Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary, National Board of Review; Mr. Alfred B. Kuttner, Review Secretary and Secretary of the Exceptional Photoplays Committee, National Board of Review; Mrs. Frances C. Barrett, Membership and Review Secretary, National Board of Review; Mrs. Bettina Gunczy, Secretary, Better Films National Council, National Board of Review.

THE Neighborhood Association of Motion Picture Committees was formed in Bloomfield, N. J., on May 23rd. This association includes a number of towns and communities in northern New Jersey. A resolution giving the purpose of the organization reads in part as follows: "Whereas, motion pictures are constantly influencing large numbers of our citizens, both young and old, either for high or low life standards; Be it resolved, that we form the Neighborhood Association of Motion Picture Committees to co-operate in bringing about public demand for the best possible pictures in our local motion picture houses." Mrs. William T. Ropes of Montclair was elected president and she is to have associated with her as other officers of the Association people vitally concerned with the civic betterment of their communities. Support has been offered in Bloomfield, where the idea originated, by the city officials, the theatre managers, the library, the church and other groups.

Such enthusiasm and interest was manifested at the initial meeting that there is little doubt but what the Association will be one of permanent and increasing value in Bloomfield and neighboring communities. The National Board has extended its services and congratulations to the new organization through Mrs. Ropes, its president.

THE Rockville Center (N. Y.) Better Films Committee has completed a series of special Juniors' programs which has received many favorable comments from members of that community along with best wishes for the renewal of the work in the fall. With the helpful co-operation of their theatre manager the Committee arranged fifteen minute prologues before the regular opening of the Saturday afternoon show. Able assistance was given by the Boy and Girl Scout leaders and the past Master Mason of Rockville Center who conducted the introductions in a most entertaining way. Two groups of small children, in costume, charmed the audience with their toe dancing on several occasions while three young girls danced in four dance figures at other performances. The Boy Scouts, for their act, put on exhibitions of fire-making and signalling which were enthusiastically received. A splendid number was the singing of part songs around a camp fire by thirty-six Girl Scouts. The Rockville Center Committee is affiliated with the National Board of Review and to Mrs. Bradley Myers, the President of the Committee, and her associates we offer congratulations upon their success during the initial season of special programs. Also to Mr. De Costa, the exhibitor, who has arranged the picture programs to give the best possible to the young people on Saturday, and, realizing the interest which it will add to his theatre as a community institution, has provided time for the prologues by local talent.

THE Atlanta (Ga.) Better Films Committee had a recent meeting of unusual interest, as several of the leading Fulenwider Players were guests for the occasion. These players are quite a big factor in the Atlanta's social and artistic life and Mrs. Newton C. Wing, the President, in introducing them expressed appreciation for the excellent type of plays they present. A round table session was much enjoyed at which all present were asked

to express their views on films in general and local plays in particular. During the business discussion Mrs. Patrick Bray reported, as executive chairman, that there were now seventy organizations represented on the Better Films Committee. Following the round table discussion and the business session the chairman of the Visual Education Committee entertained with a showing of the remarkable film *Grass* and also a picture with some of the committee as actors.

The benefit bridge party given in May under the auspices of the Better Films Committee was most successful with several hundred tables at play. This entertainment is held annually to defray the expenses of the Committee. Mrs. Carl Wesley, chairman, assisted by a charming group of sub-debs, served punch during the game while a group of children dressed as Kandy Kids sold candy. The entertainment consisted of dancing and musical numbers and a surprise feature with several young men and women players. There were numerous and elaborate prizes donated and collected through the efforts of the prize committee under Mrs. C. F. Angell. E. L. King, of the Visualizit Company, invited all those attending the bridge to take part in a motion picture to be shown later in connection with picture programs in the Atlanta Women's Club auditorium.

THE Little Theatre Guild of New Haven, Conn., has for some time been dividing its attention between the producing of plays and the showing of exceptional photoplays. Mrs. Jack Crawford, Secretary of the Guild, who is untiring in her efforts to bring the unusual pictures to her city, has been in touch with the National Board when in New York City and through correspondence regarding picture suggestions and plans. She sends enthusiastic word of the success of their undertaking in the motion picture field of entertainment. Among the pictures which they have shown are *Czar Ivan the Terrible, Variety, Siegfried* and *Kriemhild's Revenge.*

The children are considered also in the motion picture activity of the Guild. Mrs. Crawford says, "We have been holding special matinees for children all winter, Saturday mornings and Saturday afternoons. They have been quite successfully attended and have aroused a good deal of interest among parents."

THE feature of the April meeting of the Better Films Committee of Birmingham (Ala.) was the address given by the Reverend Wistor R. Smith, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, on "Why I Go to the Movies." The members were urged to bring their ministers and there was a good representation to hear this enjoyable talk. A motion picture was taken of the children leaving the regular Saturday morning Juniors' Matinee the Saturday preceding the monthly meeting and the mothers told of the enthusiasm of the children over being "in the movies," not to say anything of the mothers' pride at seeing their children in moving pictures. The feature picture at this matinee was *The Devil Horse* supplemented by the "Collegians" in one of their laugh-provoking comedies. Mrs. Caroline Engstfeld, the new chairman of the program committee distributed the following questionnaire which should bring forth interesting information:

1. Name the five films you enjoyed most the past year in order of your preference.
2. Mention what you consider the most important factor in any film.
3. Mention briefly five improvements you think should be made in films.
4. What great change has taken place in the making of motion pictures recently, and how has this affected the choice of motion picture actors and plays by the producers?

The chairman of the speakers' committee reported a very busy month for the speakers which included two addresses made by Mrs. M. W. Snell at the Sunday School of the First Christian Church.

The final Juniors' Matinee of the season on May 11th was marked by an excellent attendance and an unusually fine program. The manager of the theatre where the matinees have been held, gave the young people a treat in the form of a first run picture, *Hearts in Dixie.* The prologue presented by nineteen small pupils of the Dewberry School of Expression, was very attractive and the singing, led by Mrs. Martha Dick McClung, most enthusiastic. The children gave a "big hand" for everyone who had helped make the matinees a success—the manager, the Committee members, the P.-T. A. representatives, the Boy and Girl Scouts, the doorman and others. With such a climax to the season of successful performances the outlook is bright.

THERE is increasing interest in the use of films for church services, especially the Sunday night service. Reverend C. A. Keller of the Second Congregational Church of Ashtabula, Ohio, has made motion pictures a regular part of his church activities during the past winter. Early in the fall he offered to his congregation a picture-sermon calendar as follows:

PICTURE-SERMONS
Sunday Evenings
Second Congregational Church
7 o'clock

Oct. 7—*Man Crazy*
Oct. 14—*The Covered Wagon*
Oct. 21—*The Volga Boatman* (part 1)
Oct. 28—*The Volga Boatman* (part 2)
Nov. 4—*The Way of all Flesh*
Nov. 11—*Barbed Wire*
Nov. 18—*A Harp in Hock*
Nov. 25—*Alaskan Adventures*
Dec. 2—*The Winning of the West*
Dec. 9—*The Quarterback*
Dec. 16—*His Dog*
Dec. 23—Christmas Cantata by the Choir
Dec. 30—*The Yankee Clipper*
Jan. 6—*Chang*

A silver offering will be received at these services to pay for these pictures.
Preserve this calendar for reference.

The morning service of this church is formal worship; the evening service is for moral and religious instruction. If you do not worship elsewhere in the morning, we invite you to worship here.

Reverend Keller has been a subscriber to the NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW MAGAZINE and an advocate of motion pictures for some time and we believe his selections will hold helpful suggestions for other ministers.

AN example of the potentialities of a Children's Cinema is the little organization which gives regular shows in Geneva, Switzerland. This is the seventh season and the plan shows distinct success. The first show had a program showing police dogs at work, a cartoon film, and an anti-alcohol film.

THE Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee celebrated its fifth birthday on May 23rd by holding an Anniversary dinner. It was a happy birthday party in every way and although the serious side of better films activity was not entirely neglected the occasion was chiefly one of festivity. The guests numbering about seventy-five gathered in the Union Club House of Rutherford. Following the dinner, the toastmaster, Rev. Charles W. Popham, rector of Grace Episcopal Church of Rutherford, introduced the speakers. They were Mayor Harold R. Frizzell who highly commended the Better Films Committee for its fine work in the community, Prof Leroy E. Bowman, Department of Social Science Columbia University and Secretary of the National Community Center Association, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Dessez, Director Educational Department of Pathe Pictures, and Mrs. Harry G. Grover, the President of the Rutherford Committee. Words of greetings and praise for their successful accomplishments during the past five years were brought from the National Board to this affiliated committee by Mr. Wilton A. Barrett, the Executive Secretary, and Mrs. Bettina Gunczy, Better Films Secretary.

FROM Knoxville, Tennessee we have a typical program for a students' matinee. A travel picture entitled *Versailles* was shown along with the feature and comedy. A prologue arranged by Professor George M. Worsham consisted of several numbers played by the Walker Novelty Orchestra and the Elks' Junior Symphony Orchestra, an acrobatic dance, a Spanish dance, a song, "Memories of France," and a violin solo.

NATIONAL organizations are becoming more and more interested in the idea of the motion picture and what it can accomplish. The latest one to issue a catalogue of films and slides is the Boy Scouts of America. This pamphlet contains historical, nature, industrial, patriotic films and films made especially for the Scouts showing Scout camps, the winning of medals, vacation camps and all such things dear to the heart of the American boy. This list may be secured at the Scout headquarters, 2 Park Avenue, New York City.

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

offers through its

AFFILIATED BETTER FILMS COMMITTEES

An Opportunity to Promote Better Motion Picture Programs in Your Home Theatre

The Better Films Committee, or Motion Picture Study Club, plan has been found by many committees to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Motion Picture Study Club Plan		free
The Work of the National Board of Review		free
Selected Pictures Catalogue (annual)		25c
Selected Book-Films (annual)		10c
National Board of Review Magazine	a year	$2.00
Sample Copy of the Magazine		free
Weekly Guide to Selected Pictures	a year	$2.50

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
OCT
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Vol. IV, No. 7-8 Sept.-Oct., 1929

Example of Book-Film Tie-Up Used by the Cleveland Public Library (*see page* 5)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Who's Who In Review

When asked "What is the National Board of Review?" the answer begins with the words "A volunteer, disinterested citizen organization." It seemed to us that it would be enlightening and would tend to humanize the Board for our readers to introduce to them through these pages some of the citizens composing this organization. As first in this series we are happy to present to you Dr. Walter W. Pettit, acting chairman of the National Board. — Editor's Note.

Dr. Walter W. Pettit

I WAS born in Fredonia, Chautauqua County, New York, in 1882, near the shores of Lake Erie. My family lived in Peoria, Illinois, for several years, but returned later and I was graduated from the State Normal School in Fredonia in 1901.

On July 15th of that year I sailed with six hundred other experienced and embryonic pedagogues for Manila, which at that time, for most of us, was an extremely vague destination, having achieved headlines but recently. Flora-dora had neglected to stress the capital of the Islands.

For eight years I organized educational work in the Islands and was for five years Principal of the High School at Aguinaldo's former capital, Malolos.

It was in Baliuag, famous for its rattan hats, in the old Spanish convent yard on the plaza shaded by enormous acacia trees, that I saw my first motion picture. It was a French film in colored photography and the humorous incidents portrayed would hardly have passed our Review Committees.

The long summer vacations were spent in travel in China, Japan and the various Islands of the Philippines.

On returning to the United States I studied at Columbia University with summers at the University of Chicago.

In 1911-13 I had charge of the Elementary Technical School in Evanston, Illinois.

In 1913-14 I organized recreation work in the midwest for the Playground Recreational Association of America.

In 1915-16 I was a Special Assistant to the American Embassy in Petrograd and during much of the time was in charge of German and Austrian prisoners on the lower Volga. In 1918-19 I was commissioned a Captain in the Military Intelligence Division of the United States Army; was attached to the American Commission for negotiating peace at Paris in the Russian Division and was sent by Colonel House and President Wilson in the late winter of 1918-19 to Petrograd to secure first-hand information regarding the situation in the Soviet Republic.

Since 1915 I have been with the New York School of Social Work in charge of their Community Organization Department, and am, in addition, Assistant Director.

I have collaborated with the Director of the School in a study of the Salvation Army, and a study of the Interrelation of the Work of National Social Agencies. With the help of former students, I have a volume of community case records which has been used in a number of Schools of Social Work for teaching material.

Mrs. Pettit and I have two children, and the four of us spend our summers on a little farm in Westchester County producing cabbages and dahlias and exterminating moles and woodchucks.

What They Say of Us!

"WITHOUT the assistance of the National Board literature I would never have enjoyed my work the way I have." —Mrs. Eva W. Phair, Chairman, P.-T. A. Better Films Committee, Lyndhurst, New Jersey.

"YOUR MAGAZINE was sent to me while I was taking the course in Photoplay Composition offered by Columbia University and I find that I cannot possibly get along without your valuable articles on the movies." —Miss Grace J. Gilbert, Portland, Oregon.

"CONGRATULATIONS on the fine work accomplished for better films and the interesting account given of it in the MAGAZINE." — Mrs. Charles T. Owens, Pennsylvania State Chairman, Better Films Committee, D. A. R., Norristown, Pennsylvania.

"I AM pleased with the MAGAZINE and think it will prove of value to us in the selection of motion pictures for our school."—Charles E. Lockerby, President, Board of Education, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"I LIKE the MAGAZINE very much and will send for it next autumn when I resume my work."—Mrs. J. W. Chivers, Division of Visual Instruction, Montana Federation of Women's Clubs, Helena, Montana.

"CONGRATULATIONS on the new form of the MAGAZINE. It is a real improvement." — Reverend Lawrence C. Staples, All Souls Church, Washington, D. C.

"I FOUND some real help among the MAGAZINES you sent."—Mrs. John T. Yeatman, Chairman, Juniors' Matinees Committee, Birmingham Better Films Committee, Birmingham, Alabama.

"THE Selected Pictures Guide and the Weekly Official Bulletin have been very valuable in our work."—Mrs. Milo J. Griffith, Chairman, Better Films Committee, Racine, Wisconsin.

"I WAS pleased with the issue of the MAGAZINE that I received."—Earl H. Place, Jackson, Michigan.

"THE Spartanburg Better Films Committee has found your Better Films Forum very helpful.—Mrs. N. Irving Hyatt, Chairman, Better Films Committee, Spartanburg, South Carolina.

"I APPRECIATE very much the copy of the Annual Catalogue which I received in this morning's mail. It will be a great help in the work of the Photoplay Guide. I still find occasion to refer to previous issues."—Mrs. Frances C. Butler, Better Films Committee, Rutherford, New Jersey.

Tying Up with the Movies: Why? When? How?

By Marilla Waite Freeman
Librarian of the Main Library, Cleveland Public Library

With the national Book Week observance, which annually engages the attention of Better Films Committees, near at hand—November 17th to 23rd—we are pleased to have the opportunity to present to our readers this story of the effective book-film plan of the Cleveland Public Library. It is an excerpt from a paper delivered by Miss Freeman at the Motion Picture and Visual Aids Round Table of the American Library Association.—Editor's Note.

"TYING-UP-WITH" is, of course, merely a good low-brow phrase, or publicity patter, for cooperation, and Cleveland is the very home of cooperation. If you doubt it, read R. L. Duffus in the *New Republic* for August 4, 1928, "The good Clevelander," avers Mr. Duffus, "before turning out his light to get into bed, asks himself—'Have I cooperated to-day, or have I failed?' "

As the Cleveland Public Library, a typical good Clevelander, looked around a few years ago for new worlds to conquer, new activities with which to cooperate, its eye fell upon the movies. It saw more than a million humans per week moving in and out of the doors of the movie palaces, drawn by "that obscure hunger which is merely a nostalgia for the Magic Country." It recognized that here was an irresistible social force, one that must reach and influence more human beings than any other single social or recreational activity of our time.

The Library asked itself, "How many of these thousands know that I exist? And what I have to offer them? How can I let them know? It walked in to investigate. It sat down, and in a moment its imagination was captured, drawn into the whole vast moving pageantry of the pioneer trek of our forefathers across the continent in *The Covered Wagon*. The Library had read some of its own books, but never had it so visualized the heroism, the endurance, the faith, the imagination of the pioneers, as in that breathless hour.

Suddenly it saw how its books could vitalize these pictures for the thousands sitting there in the darkness of the theatre, and equally how the pictures could make its books come alive on their shelves. To the eye of its fancy, a new caption shone out upon the screen:

"*The Covered Wagon*, adapted from the famous novel by Emerson Hough. This novel and other thrilling books about pioneering days and the trail of the covered wagon may be found at your PUBLIC LIBRARY."

Here was real meat for that abstract being, cooperation. From that moment there remained only the questions When? and How? or, rather, How? and When?

The how of it, which began modestly with a quiet conversation between the Library's publicity representative, Mrs. Ina Roberts, and M. A. Malaney, publicity director for Loew's Cleveland Theatres, has now grown to the point where advance publicity men, for pictures and for the speaking stage as well, declare that the public library is their first port of call on arrival in the city. Their eagerness and that of the local exhibitors to secure library cooperation is so keen, and our standards so well understood, that we may be pardoned the mild egoism of believing that we have in some degree influenced the type of pictures shown in our community.

Since the Cleveland Public Library is frequently asked its technique in library-film cooperation, I will briefly outline the plan it has developed. The publicity office keeps a card file of important coming films, their producers, the books or plays on which they are based, the locale, period and, in some cases, the stars. This is partly for the reference use of the library proper to which inquiries are constantly coming concerning perhaps, films long since past: "What book was this film made from?" "Who was the star in that picture?" By skimming a film trade journal and making notes, it is comparatively easy to keep this record. At or before the completion of a film the publicity office writes to the producer's New York

office for one set of "stills" and for a press book. The producers would gladly send these without waiting for the library's request, but this results in a flood of unwanted material, and the publicity office prefers to ask for only what it is likely to find usable. This plan may, of course, be greatly simplified by libraries which do not wish to go into the matter on so extensive a scale, by arranging all details of cooperation, including the securing of stills, with the local theatre manager or exhibitor.

In the case of *Ben Hur,* more than 200 different stills were used throughout the Cleveland library system, and 160 for *The King of Kings.* These, with attractive book material, were used by the Exhibit Committee of the Main Library for show case and street window exhibits of these exceptional pictures; by the History, Fiction, Philosophy and Religion, Literature, and Foreign Literature divisions for exhibits and book displays, from their various angles, and also in the branch, school, station and county libraries. The stills are vital in library-film cooperation. It is the stills that separate the group of connecting books in displays from the thousands that line the walls about them. For some reason people who pass unseeingly by the finest kind of engraving or other reproduction of the Colosseum, will stop captivated before a poster bearing a photographic still of the Colosseum, will take home a book in which it figures, and will go that night to see the motion picture which features it. Of course, an attractive poster caption must lend point and accent to the display, however small.

In most cases the exhibitor will be glad to give the stills permanently and they can later be placed in the library's picture collection. The beautiful sepia prints of scenes and characters in Douglas Fairbanks' production of *The Iron Mask* will, for example, have permanent value to one studying costume, architecture, interior decoration, social customs, portraiture, biography and history of the period of the early years of Louis XIV and the last years of Richelieu.

Historical films, generaly speaking, are richest in book connections. The very beautiful film version of E. Barrington's *The Divine Lady,* though this book is not in itself extraordinary, has brought into play for exhibit and circulation a wide range of library book and art material.

Exhibits are written up for the newspapers by the publicity office, or frequently by the reporters themselves when some special angle of interest is presented. The beautiful Romney prints displayed by the Library in connection with the showing of *The Divine Lady* called out a special article from the *Plain Dealer's* art editor; and the theatre manager included an invitation to view the library's exhibit in his newspaper advertisements of the picture.

Frequently, some unusual angle of potential interest is discovered in a review of the films, by the reviewers, as with the charming picture from the play "Seventh Heaven", a quo-

Bulletin Board Display of Book-jackets, Bookmarks, Library Pictures and Stills shown for the film "The Divine Lady" by the Cleveland Public Library

tation from which, "Get courage inside you," was used to display and get into eager circulation a group of such stimulation books on courageous living as Barrie's "Courage" and Basil King's "Conquest of Fear." *Sorrel and Son* brought a gratifying circulation of fiction and biography suggested under the captions, "Good fathers in fiction," and "Some real fathers and sons," as well as of books about "The job of being a dad."

Even more important in reaching the movie fan where he lives, are the so-called bookmark reading lists. Indeed, the Cleveland Public Library's very first bit of film cooperation was a bookmark bearing a brief list of titles of fiction, history and biography of interest in connection with the filmed version of the Sabatini novel *Scaramouche.* Later we learned from the producers that, so keen had been their advance, publicity men to emulate this new "tie-up," the Cleveland bookmark had been duplicated in practically every town containing a public library in which the picture was subsequently shown.

When a bookmark is requested the first step is to get the film approved for cooperation. This done, each division, History, Fiction, or others having "connecting" books sends these to the library editor, who selects from the many volumes the few most suitable for the bookmark, and with a fine flair for the grandiloquent language of the movies, groups these under pertinent captions, tops the list with an apt quotation and sends the copy, ready for the printer, to the publicity representative. The latter adds the "frame" at the end, briefly announcing the film with an acknowledgment to the theatre which, and this I should emphasize, always pays for the printing; e.g., "Printed by courtesy of The Allen Theatre, presenting John Barrymore in *The Tempest.*" The copy, duly approved, is then turned over to the official who has requested the bookmark, with the stipulation that proof be submitted to the library editor. This last provision protects the library as to printing errors and format, and has resulted in quite uniformly attractive looking bookmarks.

The library also stipulates that since the bookmarks are distributed in the libraries of the Cleveland system, an at least equal number must be used in the theatre. These are supposed to be distributed with or printed in the programs, in the rare cases where there are programs, but more usually are laid on a table in the theatre lobby, with a sign calling attention to them, or on the ledge back of which the crowds stand while waiting for seats. When the picture *We Americans* was shown in Keith's Palace Theatre, the Library, in addition to its bookmarks exhibited in the theatre lobby a set of the American Library Association Reading with a Purpose courses, featuring especially "Americans From Abroad," and sold, in consequence, a considerable number of these reading courses.

At the library end, the bookmarks are, in case of a very exceptional picture, slipped into outgoing books. As a rule, they lie on the charging desks and in listracks or near the exhibits with which they tie up, where the public may help itself to them. The Boston Public Library reports from thirty to sixty thousand copies of a bookmark placed on the delivery counters of the Central Library and the branches, and taken by interested patrons.

What all this type of cooperation can do for the picture is obvious. What it has accomplished for the library, among other things, is to set a large number of film fans to reading history, biography, travel, by calling attention to books that are as interesting and often as romantic as fiction. Where in fiction, for example, can one find the counterpart of the story of Joan of Arc? Here is one of those stories that "could not be true, yet is." Rendered in film form with touching and impressive beauty, it still keeps in steady circulation all books that tell the miraculous tale of the Maid, and of the historic events through which she moved. *Peaks of Destiny* carried countless readers to Switzerland and the Alps, with their poetry and their romance, and gave a new fillip to the mountaineering art by the including in the book list of "Climbs on Alpine Peaks," by A. A. Ratti, now Pope Pius XI.

A year after the appearance of *Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall* in picture form, the head of the History Division of the Cleveland Library reported that not since the first showing of the picture had she been able to keep a copy of the life of Queen Elizabeth on the shelves, nor of Mary, Queen of Scots. "A young woman came to the division one eve-

(*Continued on page* 14)

Exceptional Photoplays

COMMITTEE

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Rita C. McGoldrick
Harriet Menken
Frances T. Patterson
J. K. Paulding
Walter W. Pettit
M. R. Werner

A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers who are looking beyond what the popular theatres have to offer.

SECRETARY

Alfred B. Kuttner

EDITORS

Alfred B. Kuttner
Wilton A. Barrett

Paris Bound

Directed by.....Edward H. Griffith
Photographed by.....Norbert Bodine

The Cast

Mary Hutton.....Ann Harding
Jim Hutton.....Fredric March
James Hutton, Sr.....George Irving
Richard Parrish.....Leslie Fenton
Peter.....Hallam Cooley
Nora Cope.....Juliette Crosby
Helen White.....Charlotte Walker
Noel Farley.....Carmelita Geraghty
Fanny Shipman.....Ilka Chase

From the stage play by Philip Barry

THE sound picture is yet so novel that each new picture is compared with those preceding it and *Paris Bound* comes well among the front rank of talking pictures to date. It was a stage play which had a long and successful Broadway run and its transference to the screen proves that the sophisticated social drama, which before the advent of the sound pictures was often so distinctly a failure when put upon the screen, can now favorably serve as the source for picture material. *Paris Bound* proves not only this but also that with the employment of certain cinematic means the picture may surpass the play in subtlety of character portrayal.

No little credit for the exceptional quality of this picture is due to the charm and fine acting of Ann Harding in the part of Mary Hutton. Miss Harding has made for herself an important place on the American stage and her motion picture debut leaves no doubt as to her ability as a screen artist. She has a rare and delicate beauty which seems expressive of an unique personality. In this story she plays her part with admirable restraint making the character a harmonious one in appearance, action and sound, for her voice has the cool timbre that blends with her dignity of motion. However, underneath this pleasing restraint is an indication of great emotional strength.

Fredric March is excellent in the part of the husband. He gives to the role an exceedingly human quality. There is a warmth in his characterization which makes it delightfully balance the more deliberate character of the wife, as played by Ann Harding, and helps to impart a reality to this story of two people tempermentally different but wise enough to adjust a marital rift with a clever combination of insight and worldly wisdom.

Ann Harding and Frederic March in "Paris Bound"

The story opens on the wedding day of two charming young people, Mary Archer and Jim Hutton. They both come from families of wealth and smartness and in their circle divorce is the remedy most quickly sought when marriage fails to fulfill its expectations. These young people are overwhelmed at the thought that such an eventuality might overtake their marriage and they make a serious promise to keep it on a basis of sensible understanding. The story then becomes episodic showing an event in the second, third and fourth years of their married life. Each year it is the annual trip which John takes in the interests of his publishing house to Paris, a journey upon which his wife refuses to accompany him as she adheres to an idea of hers that parting for a time is wise. When, during one of these Paris sojourns, a former sweetheart of the husband plots a meeting with him which later comes to the wife's ears there seems imminent a break such as they hoped to avoid. The wife is determined to divorce her husband upon his return. In the meantime she continues to devote herself to helping a young composer, a friend of long standing, who is working in her music room and with whom she holds in common the love of music. He is unable to finish a ballet upon which they have worked together because he is not free to express his love for her which is ineffaceably bound up with his music. When, however, she is wavering because of her husband's unfaithfulness, he endeavors to convince her that their love is a thing outside her marriage. All this is very subtely handled and contains none of the melodrama which a mere stating of the plot implies.

The climax of this scene is the most interesting sequence of the picture from the angle of photography as it is told by pure camera technique. While *Paris Bound* is a dialogue picture throughout this particular part is revealed without words by having the ballet brought to life as it were, through the camera. The young composer is at the piano playing and Mary is nearby listening. As the moving figures of the ballet come upon the screen one after another to dance and prance and turn, intermingled with them are the whirling thoughts of the two characters. With the diminishing or increasing of different images is conveyed their changing emotions. Here music and camera are harmonously combined, there is no intruded "theme song" but a logical plot unfoldment by a perfect interweaving of shadow and sound.

As to the story's end, it is a happy ending in that it is accomplished with as much understanding on the part of the characters in the play as the director Edward H. Griffith has shown in his telling of the story in pictures.

Produced and Distributed by Pathe Exchange, Inc.

THE first talking motion pictures in which Esperanto is used were made recently during the twenty-second annual conference of the Esperanto Association of North America in the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios. Donald E. Parrish, national secretary of the Universal Esperanto Association of Geneva, Switzerland, made an address in which he gave a short description of the international language and a salutation in Esperanto. Henry W. Hetzel and Mrs. Charles Chomette gave an Esperanto dialogue for producers at the Paramount studios.

IT is a well-established fact that American pictures "take" better in all foreign countries than foreign pictures do here. This may be explained by the interest which every other nation has in the American locale, without doubt due primarily to the immigration of its citizens to America.

IN the hope of diverting to other purposes much of the money now spent in Russia for liquor, the educational authorities have launched a campaign for the "kinofication" of the country. An expenditure of $250,000,000 is proposed over a five-year period. The money would be used to construct theatres in towns and even the smallest villages, and clubs in workingmen's settlements would be equipped for the showing of films.

BETTER FILMS FORUM
EDITOR: BETTINA GUNCZY
Department of the Better Films National Council

Matinees in Macon

By MRS. PIERCY CHESTNEY
President, Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee

Better Films Committees new in the field of Junior Matinees who now and then feel discouraged will be cheered by this story of a sixth year of successful matinees. Mrs. Chestney and her associates in the Committee have been so fortunate in the continued interest which they have been able to maintain in their matinees that we asked Mrs. Chestney to send us a story of their splendid activties and she responded willingly with the report printed below for in spite of the work the home matinees demand Mrs. Chestney is always generous in answering outside requests. As this story indicates every opportunity to make the shows appealing to the children is used to advantage. —EDITOR'S NOTE.

FOLLOWING the precedent established upon its organization on August 29, 1923, the Macon Better Films Committee is continuing with programs which combine entertainment, instruction and amusement of the nth degree, with the idea in mind of making this weekly film fare so attractive to the children of Macon that they will become so interested in looking forward to Saturday morning they will forget about the regular theatre programs.

In arranging the large majority of these programs the Committee has in mind boys and girls of 11 and 12 years of age, as it feels children younger than that should attend pictures only on rare occasions. For these "rare occasions" which come about three or four times a year, programs are planned especially for the "littlest fellows."

On March 23rd, for the fourth time in five years *Peter Pan* was shown to a crowded house.

Such a program was that of November 3rd when several one-reel subjects were given, the entire program lasting an hour and a quarter The program consisted of *Goldilocks, The Alphabetical Zoo, Old Mother Hubbard,* three La Fontaine fables (*The Hare and the Tortoise, The Lion and the Mouse* and *The Prophecy of the Dying Bird*) and *Humpty Dumpty* with the prologue, a lullaby sung by ten little girls swinging in their arms their baby dolls.

The next "rare occasion" fell on June 1st when *The Bell of Atri* was a high light. This being given at the request of mothers and teachers of third grade children whose reading course at school has made them love this story taken from the Longfellow poem of the horse that pleaded his own case for justice from his miserly old master.

The last "rare occasion" comes in December when the Committee will present the ever-new annual program with the *Night Before Christmas* and other classics.

ANNIVERSARIES CELEBRATED

Grand Opera is sung in Macon each year in January. So, naturally, the program arranged for the Saturday preceding the Monday opening of the season is devoted to an opera program. On January 5th, two opera pictures were shown—*The Last Rose of Summer* ("Martha" was one of the season's bills) and *William Tell.* The prologue that morning consisted of selections from several of the coming operas by a large chorus from one of the schools, under the direction of the supervisor of music of the school system.

January 19th being the birthday of Robert E. Lee, the prologue was in commemoration of that anniversary, and two short reels *Daniel Webster* and *Benjamin Franklin* were shown in honor of the birthdays of those men, January 17th and 19th.

On January 26th, a one-reel subject, *Robert Burns* was screened in celebration of the poet's

birthday which came the day before. In order to gather the children in to "educate" them about Burns, the feature picture chosen for that date was Rin-Tin-Tin in *The Million Dollar Collar*. As it was Better Dance Week, a demonstration was given by a local dancing school.

Monte Blue in *Across the Atlantic* brought them in for their education on February 2nd, when the prologue consisted of a beautiful exercise commemorative of the birthdays of Sidney Lanier, Albert Sidney Johnston and Joseph E. Johnston all of which fall on February 3rd.

This exercise consisted of showing a picture, in colors, of each of these distinguished men, followed by a very brief statement concerning each, the introduction of the head of the local camp of Confederate veterans who had served under Joseph E. Johnston, a statement of the occasions on which General Johnston had been a guest in Macon. The singing by one of the high school boys of Lanier's "A Ballad of the Trees and the Master" completed the prologue.

Georgia Day Celebrated

February 9th marked the celebration of two important dates—Dicken's birthday, February 7th and Georgia Day, February 12th. The four-reel subject, *Georgia* was shown with a Gang comedy as the light note. *Georgia* produced by the Georgia Power Company and available for use anywhere, free, is an industrial film, but it is so filled with interest that the Committee has received frequent requests for its repetition.

The prologue on February 9th was an elaborate pageant which brought into review the past history of the state and its present activities, resources, and so forth. This was written by one of the teachers and produced with her pupils.

The lamented Fred Thomson and Silver King were the feature for February 16th. At this time a Valentine Review was given by students of one of the dancing schools. The Nunnally Candy Company provided the immense heart out of which tumbled the children dressed to represent the various kinds of candy made by this company. Nunnally also sent as souvenirs for the morning candy kisses for all the children.

On Washington's birthday a short reel gave a brief biographical sketch of the first President and the Junior Department of Dramatic Art of Wesleyan College gave a playlet "The Little Month of Big Days," a colorful presentation, elaborately costumed, of the many outstanding dates in that month.

The Longfellow and Alexander Graham Bell celebration fell on March 2nd. A short picture-sketch of the poet and his *Courtship of Miles Standish* were given, with other short subjects among which was the *Big Little Fellow*, a telephone picture loaned by the local exchange.

March 9th proved to be one of the most popular occasions. At this time pictures stressing the Presidential Inauguration of the preceding Monday were given. *Our Presidents,* which shows the picture of every President of the U. S. from Washington through Coolidge, was run, and suitable music played as each flashed on the screen—first the name of the President, then his picture and the dates of his administration, finally, the outstanding remark made by him during his tenure of office. A short subject, *Today Honors Yesterday,* was given and that unit of the program closed with the Fox Movietone Newsreel, showing Hoover's inauguration—an excellent contrast in times, costuming, style of ceremony and in the progress made by the motion picture. To all of this program the children reacted marvelously, applauding and cheering to the echo the appearance of each President.

The 186th anniversary of the founding of West Point was fittingly observed by the showing of the feature, *West Point* and using as the prologue, a drill by a crack squad from the high school. Army officers in town and their families were honor guests.

Easter Eve found a "mixy" program billed, but every unit was a high light, if applause can be used as a criterion. While Harold Lloyd, in *Grandma's Boy* visited the children at their own request, and the prologue had three parts—a dancer in a bunny costume, a real clown from the circus wintering in Macon and a whistling Jap, the unit which received the greatest applause was a short reel entitled *The Life of Christ from Great Paintings*. It was viewed in perfect silence, but thunderously applauded at its close.

April 6th and 13th were "just programs," with Rinty and Hoot Gibson pictures and no educational feature except a short reel, *Thomas Jefferson,* on April 13th the date of

his birth.

But on April 20th during "Be Kind to Animals Week" there was great excitement over the real live puppy and two real live kittens which were the attendance prizes for the morning. The feature was *Under the Black Eagle* a story of the World War—a man and his dog—and a Gang comedy, *Love My Dog*. Animal crackers donated by the National Biscuit Company were given as souvenirs.

On April 26th came the only "extra" matinee the Committee sponsored during the year—the Memorial Day matinee in honor of the Confederate veterans of Macon and the surrounding country. The short subject was *The Heart of Robert E. Lee*, a two-reel picture in colors; the feature, *Morgan's Last Raid*. The newsreel was a compilation of sections of reels which, from time to time, have been presented to the Committee by the various producing companies—Pathe, Paramount, International, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Universal—and shows scenes of interest to all Southerners.

The Making of the First Confederate Flag on Georgia's Soil, a spectacular, colorful pageant of seven tableaux and music, was given as the prologue. Twenty-odd people in the costumes of the sixties represented Macon people who actually took part in the scenes the pageant depicts.

The guests who are entertained each Saturday by the Committee, are always invited for some particular reason. For instance, for the inauguration program, descendants of Presidents of the U. S. were the guests. On Longfellow's birthday, descendants of John Alden. Opera Week, the directors of the Macon Opera Association and the stars were guests and so on throughout the year.

Among the outstanding programs given and planned for the rest of the year are Music Week, Lindbergh Week, Flag Day, July 4, Navy Day, Book Week, National Education Week, Woodrow Wilson's birthday, Arbor Day and so forth.

All of the plans of the Macon Better Films Committee would go for naught, possibly, were it not for the vision of the managers with whom the Committee has worked.

The present resident manager of the Publix Theatres Corporation is in Macon for the second time since the Committee's organization, and his cooperation, vital interest and untiring efforts to assist the Committee in its endeavors to provide suitable entertainment for the children of the community makes a joy of the Committee's work which is an earnest effort to train the young people of Macon to find better entertainment in better pictures.

THE Y. M. C. A. is a leader among the organizations making use of motion pictures in their activities. In the preparation of their programs great care is taken which accounts for the number of Y. M. C. A. secretaries using the NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW MAGAZINE. The following quoted from a letter from Mr. C. M. Shepherd, Promotion Secretary of the Baltimore (Md.) Y. M. C. A., one of our enthusiastic readers, is characteristic of the service which the Y. M. C. A. makes of the National Board publication. An attractive little folder with a colorful cover announces:

"Among the many social features of the "Y" is the Motion Picture program in the lobby at 7:30 on Saturday night. The following feature films will be shown—

One Minute to Play—a football story with Red Grange.

Regular Scout—Fred Thomson and a mounted detachment of Boy Scouts.

Laddie—from the novel by Gene Stratton Porter.

Timid Terror—comedy of a bond salesman with an inferiority complex.

Coney Island—a romance of a young man who bought a roller coaster.

Desert Pirate—with Tom Tyler and Frankie Darrow.

Freckles—an appealing romance of the great Limberlost.

Skinner's Big Idea—becoming junior partner Skinner changes the office force.

Shanghaied—a story of the Pacific coast.

It is unfortunate that the titles sometime give an inadequate idea of the pictures. All of these pictures are recommended by the National Board of Review.

For members and their guests."

IN order to entertain the small shopper accompanists a most appreciated work is being carried on by the W. G. Schwartz Company Store of Norfolk (Va.). On Saturdays at 10:30 A. M. and 3 and 4 P. M. there is held a matinee for children in their auditorium with no admission charge.

Book Week and Motion Pictures

"WHY should one read about Book Week in a motion picture magazine?" is a likely question. The answer is that those wisely interested in motion pictures are interested in them not only as an entertainment but as an important social force. This being true many of the socially minded of the community, both motion picture patrons and those actively engaged in some form of better films work, are alert to take advantage of any opportunity to link the motion picture more closely with the other cultural and social forces effecting local life. Book Week offers an especial chance for such a tie-up since motion pictures are related to books through film adaptations, novelized pictures and the general stimulus which they give to reading. Books form the center of numerous organized interests such as libraries, schools, clubs and book stores.

The National Association of Book Publishers, sponsors of National Book Week, in writing of the significance of Book Week says, "In many towns the entire community takes part in this annual book festival, women's clubs, churches, schools, business men's clubs, parent-teacher associations, libraries, department stores, book stores and newspapers all participating."

An example of a cooperative Book Week observance given in one of the Association's pamphlets is that of an active better films committee city. It is headed "Book Week in Atlanta" and states, "Many civic organizations took part in Book Week in Atlanta in November, 1928. Letters were sent by the fourth, fifth and sixth grade pupils in the schools of the city to 250 representative citizens, asking what books they enjoyed most as children and which of these they would recommend. The letters with the names of the chosen tales were returned and each grade selected a book to portray. The foyer and upper floor of the Carnegie Library were filled with colorful and ingenious picturizations of books. There were clay models and models in soap, sand tables, booklets, peep shows, scenes cut out in silhouettes, placques, posters and book plates. Miller's Bookstore awarded a book prize to the classes which worked out the best displays. Atlantans flocked to the library to see the exhibit. Each elementary and high school principal arranged a special program for the Week and original plays, book fairs and essay contests were held. The Parent-Teacher Council cooperated in planning these features. Proceeds from several of the programs were used to increase the number of volumes in school libraries. Window and store displays of the best books for boys and girls with suggestions for Christmas purchases were arranged at all the bookshops of the city. The West End Theatre and Palace Theatre showed book-films and asked Boy and Girl Scouts to act as hosts and hostesses. There were interesting programs and addresses at women's clubs and men's luncheon club meetings, and the newspapers contributed greatly to the success and scope

of the observance of the Week, through their editorials and complete reports of all the special events."

The 1929 Book Week comes on the dates November 17th-23rd. With the thought in mind of book-film tie-ups the National Board has prepared, as it does each year, a List of Selected Book-Films. It contains 111 selected pictures, either adapted from books or especially related to reading, seen during the period October 1928-October 1929. Send for the list (see coupon page 23) and make book-films a part of Book Week.

Tying Up With the Movies

(*Continued from page 7*)

ning, bringing with her a cherished 'Dorothy of Vernon' bookmark from which she had been reading for a year. "We realized how popular the film had made these books," said the division head, "when we were unable to supply her with a single book from the list, as all copies were in circulation including even the histories of the period. However, we found an equally desirable book that had not been listed, so she went away happy."

The picture *Show Boat* has drawn into circulation all the Mississippi lore from Mark Twain's classic down and has created a demand for the negro spirituals and folk-songs as well. For the *Abraham Lincoln* picture, the theatre manager reported several persons as having returned to replace lost copies of the bookmark. The Schools and Children's Departments of the library experienced for a long time a subsequent demand for books about Lincoln.

From the divisions of Philosophy and Religion and of Foreign Literature, after the showing of *The Ten Commandments* and *King of Kings,* was reported a greatly stimulated circulation of the Bible, a book which the library carries in some twenty-seven languages. One lady was so delighted with her discovery of Senator Beveridge's little book, "The Bible as Good Reading," that she went off to buy six copies to present to her friends.

What about the talkies? Or the squawkies as Will Rogers dubbed them, till he, too, signed up with them—what will be their effect on the library? Well, they are inevitable, much as we may dislike them in their present awkward age, or squawkward stage,—"the world do move," and the library must move along with it. If you have seen Eric Robot, the new talking metallic man, you know that talking has come to stay. I might say alas, but it would be useless. Roger W. Babson suggests that even books are likely soon to come in rolls to be put in a machine, and that we can then relax upon a couch and have the book automatically read to us, illustrated by moving pictures!

We are told that ultimately the talkie will in turn tame and modulate that bane of Europe, the American voice; that escaping from its scenes of the underworld and police headquarters, it will bear to every farm and village the presence and the speech of great artists, and thus will raise the universal standard of dramatic taste. This we are eager to believe, and to its consummation, ready to lend a hand.

THAT the film industry is assuming an important position in the economic life of Germany is shown by recent statistics putting the number of persons directly employed in that line in Berlin alone at 12,500. When the allied industries, optical, raw-film, film printing, film press and costumes are included the total number of those making their living out of film production in the German capital is about 50,000. Among the workers in the film industry are 3,300 persons on the staffs of producing and distributing firms, 3,150 employes in cinemas, 1,900 musicians in cinemas, 1,800 studio workmen, 800 copying plants workers, 500 assistants, usually employed, 400 artists, 100 directors and 550 cameramen, architects, authors et al.

INSTRUCTION by motion pictures has been inaugurated in the Bellevue High School, Pittsburgh (Pa.). Students purchased a combination stereopticon and moving picture machine out of the proceeds of entertainments and it is being used in classrooms and entertainment programs. The picture machine will be useful in supplementing oral instruction and textbook, especially in American history and social subjects, and will also be used in singing.

Selected Pictures Guide

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

Alfred B. Kuttner
Frances C. Barrett

EDITOR

Bettina Gunczy

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

Note—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

*—*Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

Big Time

Directed by ..... *Kenneth Hawks*

Featuring ..... *Lee Tracy*, *Mae Clark*

Story "Little Ledna" by William Wallace Smith

ONCE again we have the plot of the vaudeville team broken up because of the braggadocian attitude of one member who too late realizes that it took both to put over the act. However, it is presented here with such sincere acting that the time worn story can be quite forgiven and too, there is a novel ending. When a young comedian and a girl singer get a chance to launch their specialty they prove a success but just enough to make their combined salaries pay the board bill for one so they solve this difficulty by getting married and doing home cooking. All goes well and they are soon on "Big Time" but when the man decides the girl is no longer necessary to the act they part and public favor vanishes as quickly as it came. The male lead is played so humanly by Lee Tracy, famed for his portrayal of a like character in the stage version of "Broadway," that one is bound to sympathize with him and be happy when the reunion comes. Good direction is also noted in this final scene.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—8 reels)

Blackmail

Directed by ..... *Alfred Hitchcock*

Featuring ..... *Anny Ondra*, *John Longden*

Play by Charles Bennett

THE first sound picture produced in England. A girl engaged to a Scotland Yard detective, kills an artist in self-defense. The detective finds the clue which would convict his sweetheart but keeps it to himself in order to protect her. A blackmailing ex-convict learns of the situation and seeks to collect the money for his silence. His past record comes up to confound him and the girl goes free. The sound and talking reproductions in this picture are unusually fine and the atmosphere of London with the background of Scotland Yard bears the ear marks of authenticity.

For family audience including young people.
(Sono Art-World Wide—9 reels)

The Delightful Rogue

Directed by ..... *A. Leslie Pearce*

Featuring ..... *Rod La Roque*

Story by Wallace Smith

IN this charming burlesque, Rod La Roque as the bold pirate is everything that a pirate should be. He is handsome and has a very gallant manner; he walks right into the face of danger with a pleasant smile and escapes without effort; he has a habit of doing just

what he pleases and getting just what he wants—all of which succeed in terrorizing the natives of the tiny Mediterranean island where he anchors his beautiful yacht, and in fascinating the lovely American girl living there. He goes to a great deal of trouble to show her how unworthy is her fiance something which she has felt ever since she first saw the dashing pirate. Of course his plans work out perfectly and when he sets sail, the girl goes with him.

For family audience including young people.
(RKO Pictues—7 reels)

Dynamite

Directed by.....*Cecil B. DeMille*
Featuring.....*Conrad Nagel*, *Kay Johnson*

Original screen story by Jeanie McPherson

A SPOILED society girl, through the terms of a strange will made by her grandfather, must marry within thirty days. She is in love with a married man whose mercenary wife, although she does not love him, refuses to divorce him unless she is paid a large sum of money. In order to live up to the terms of her grandfather's will the girl marries a few hours before his execution a miner convicted of murder. However, the miner is exonerated. The heroine is advised by her lawyers that she must live with her husband and so goes to the mining town and lives the life of a miner's wife to obtain her money. There she realizes her uselessness as a wife to any man and comes to see that her crowd consisted mainly of cads and butterflies. A mining disaster in which her life and that of the two men who love her are endangered, forces her to make a choice and she finds happiness with the miner. The picture is produced in the lavish style typical of Mr. DeMille and the acting is of a high order.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—14 reels)

Fast Company

Directed by.....*A. E. Sutherland*
Featuring.....*"Skeets" Gallagher*, *Evelyn Brent*

Play by Ring Lardner and George Cohan

AN ironic story with a typical Ring Lardner flavor of a conceited major league baseball player. He is kidded along by a hardboiled vaudeville dancer who persuades him to shift his baseball contract to another league by pretending that she likes him. On the eve of the deciding game he realizes that he has been hoaxed all along and in his chagrin almost loses the game for his team. His frantic manager brings on the girl who by this time has come to love him and the game is saved.

For family audience including children.
(Paramount—8 reels)

Flight

Directed by.....*Frank R. Capra*
Featuring.....*Jack Holt*, *Lila Lee*, *Ralph Graves*

Original screen story by Ralph Graves

THERE are untold possibilities of what can be done in the filming of aeroplanes. We have seen a number of such films and now in *Flight* all the thrilling beauty of planes in air is brought to us better than ever before. The story is concerned with a student in the flying marine corps and his teacher, both in love with the same girl. The boy, however, out of gratitude for all the man has done for him, remains silent until the girl makes her choice between them. Jack Holt, as the outwardly hard-boiled teacher, gives a very fine performance. But it is the aeroplanes that hold us intent. In some marvelous scenes our eyes widen and we gasp for breath as we feel ourselves swooping through the air at a terrifying speed and we are exhausted at the end of the flight but eager for the next one. There are lovely shots of planes in formation flying at night, then in the early morning light and later in the brilliant sunshine.

For family audience including children.
(Columbia—14 reels)

*Frozen Justice

Directed by.....*Alan Dwan*
Featuring.....*Lenore Ulric*

Novel by Ejmar Mikelsem

AND now Lenore Ulric has brought her vivid personality to the screen. It is a surprise to find her in the role of the unhappy little half-caste Eskimo, Taya, far up in the frozen north after the torrid stage productions she has recently graced. Taya is the wife of

the tribe's chief but her love for him cannot overcome her longing to see the land of her white father and when the captain of a visiting ship urges her to go to Nome with him, she consents. But Nome in 1898, the headquarters of the gold seekers, was not as Taya pictured it. In some marvelously colorful scenes all the tawdriness of Nome is laid before us and at the noisy cabaret where Taya is forced to become an entertainer, we are treated to several fine and amusing bits of characterization. Taya sings in her lovely husky voice and her eyes tell that she dreams of her husband. She has found that, just as she did not fit into the Eskimo tribe, neither is she accepted by the whites. The picture is splendidly produced and excellently acted, particularly by Miss Ulric.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—7 reels)

The Girl from Havana

Directed by.....*Benjamin Stoloff*

Featuring.....*Lola Lane*, *Paul Page*

Original screen story by John Stone

A BAND of diamond thieves raid a jewelry store by staging a false mad dog scare in it and then escape on board a boat for Havana. A girl detective sails also, pretending to be a member of a theatrical troupe. She starts the gang quarreling among themselves and gains their confidence after convincing them that she is a crook, too. By a clever ruse she succeeds in obtaining the jewelry and hands the crooks over to the police in Havana. The dialogue is often witty and the scenes in Havana and the passage through the Panama Canal help to make the picture vivid.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—6 reels)

* Gold Diggers of Broadway

Directed by.....*Roy del Ruth*

Featuring.....*Nancy Welford*, *Conway Tearle*

Play by Avery Hopwood

AN irate uncle arrives with his lawyer to prevent the marriage of his nephew with a chorus girl. The uncle and lawyer are firmly convinced that all chorus girls are gold diggers but each falls in love with a chorus girl himself thus making it easy for the nephew to achieve his marital ambition. The plot is enlivened with amusing backstage scenes.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—10 reels)

*The Green Goddess

Directed by.....*Alfred Green*

Featuring.....*George Arliss*, *Alice Joyce*

Play by William Archer

THAT excellent actor, George Arliss, has now made an audible screen record of his role as the Rajah in "The Green Goddess", which he has already so successfully played on stage and silent screen. In the heart of the Himalayas is a fantastic kingdom ruled by an eastern monarch of western education. He holds in his power an English couple and their friend, victims of an aeroplane wreck. In his suave manner he explains that his subjects demand their death in return for the hanging by the British of three of their countrymen. But he assures them with an ingratiating smile that, until the execution, his palace is at their command. There seems no escape until they discover a wireless and succeed in getting help in time. H. B. Warner as the husband gives a very excellent performance but of course it is George Arliss with his compelling personality and polished acting who holds the spectator charmed.

For family audience including young people.

(Warner—7 reels)

* Hallelujah

Directed by.....*King Vidor*

Featuring.....*Daniel Haynes*, *Nina Mae McKinney*

Original screen story by King Vidor

A RHAPSODICAL melodrama of negro life skillfully acted by an all-negro cast. Against a background of religious feeling is told the story of a cottonpicker who turns evangelist. This conversion takes place when he has inadvertently shot his brother in a dive after losing all his money through the wiles of a siren. He meets the siren and again falls from his state of grace. However she proves fickle and the evangelist is lead to commit murder for her sake. He does time in prison after which he

returns to his distracted family. The crowd scenes at the revival meetings and the baptisms in the river are particularly well handled. The vocal effects are excellent.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—12 reels)

Hearts in Exile

Directed by.....*Michael Curtiz*
Featuring.....*Dolores Costello*, *Grant Withers*, *James Kirkwood*

Story by John Oxemham

IN this romance of Russia the daughter of a poor shop owner, in love with a young medical student refuses to marry him because of his shiftless ways and marries instead a wealthy nobleman. Two years later both men are exiled to Siberia. Vera, following her husband, finds the student in his place, having given the nobleman his shorter sentence so that Vera may the sooner be reunited to her husband. During the time she is forced to live in his cabin, she discovers his fine qualities and her love is reawakened. When her husband appears to rescue them both, she confesses her love and the nobleman, heartbroken, leaves them to be happy together. The acting of all the members of the cast is excellent.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—7 reels)

*Her Private Affair

Directed by.....*Paul L. Stein*
Featuring.....*Ann Harding*

Play by Leo Urvantzov

A VERY excellent performance by Ann Harding. It is the familiar story of the wife killing her blackmailer when she attempts to recover her letters in order to protect her husband's reputation. But so fine is Miss Harding's portrayal of the terrified young wife that the audience is held fascinated from beginning to end. With the blackmailer dead, the wife is free to continue her happy life with her husband. But gone is her peace of mind and with it her poise. Even her husband's loving devotion is too much for her guilty conscience and she leaves him. Their friends plan a reconciliation and bring them together at the New Year's Eve celebration. Here circumstances force her to confess to her husband but he understands and she is happy again. A smoothly directed film well acted by a competent cast, it is made into something fine and dramatic by the outstanding performance of the lovely Ann Harding.

For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—7 reels)

Hurricane

Directed by.....*Ralph Ince*
Featuring.....*Hobart Bosworth*, *Leila Hyams*

Original screen story by Norman Springer and Evelyn Campbell

HOBART BOSWORTH, turned loose in one of his favorite stories of a truculent sea captain battling the elements and unruly crews, improves notably upon many of his previous pictures by the skillful use of his trained voice. He puts to sea with a crew of South Sea Island buccaneers who plan to capture his ship but with the aid of a few faithful survivors of his original crew he thwarts the conspiracy. In the middle of the ocean he picks up a small boat containing his wife who apparently deserted him twenty years ago, together with her daughter. In revenge he plans to marry the girl to one of the most repulsive of the mutineers but realizes in time that she is his own daughter and that his wife had been misled into thinking that he was dead.

For family audience including young people.
(Columbia—7 reels)

Illusion

Directed by.....*Lothar Mendes*
Featuring.....*Nancy Carroll*, *Charles Rogers*

Novel by Arthur Train

IN this story of vaudeville life a very promising team is broken up when the boy, Carlee, finds new interests in society life. He discovers that his charming personality and pleasing appearance makes him welcome in the select circle and there he is much attracted by an heiress. Meanwhile, Claire, his vaudeville partner, loves him deeply and is too unhappy to go on. She almost succeeds in her desperate plan to die but she is glad to live when she finds that Carlee is tired of the life he has been leading and has come back to her. Well produced with some good singing and dancing.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

In the Headlines

Directed by.....*John G. Adolfi*
Featuring.....*Grant Withers*, *Marion Nixon*

Original screen story by Joseph Jackson

GRANT WITHERS plays the part of the conceited young hero more engagingly than any other actor we have seen. As the cocky newspaper reporter, he is most amusing in his egotism and in the high-handed manner he handles his work. On the big double murder case given him to cover, a new reporter, a young girl, is assigned to help him and for the first time in his career his newspaper takes second place. Then things begin to happen and the reporter and the girl together succeed in solving the mystery of the double murder and getting the news to their paper first.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—8 reels)

The Love Doctor

Directed by.....*Melville Brown*
Featuring.....*Richard Dix*

Play "The Boomerang" by Michael Smith and Victor Mapes

RICHARD DIX, essaying the role of the hero of the well-known play "The Boomerang," declares himself an expert in all the symptoms of love and the strategy of curing it. Assisted by his attractive nurse he has great success with his first patient but the nurse soon masters the doctor's technique and successfully employs it to her own advantage.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—6 reels)

The Mysterious Island

Directed by.....*Lucien Hubbard*
Featuring.....*Lionel Barrymore*, *Lloyd Hughes*

Novel by Jules Verne

THE strange adventures under the sea, based upon Jules Verne's brilliant anticipations of the possibilities of the submarine, make this an unusual picture. The hero of the story has isolated himself upon a mysterious island in order to perfect the construction of a submarine with which he hopes to explore the bottom of the ocean. A powerful enemy pretends friendship for him in order to learn his secret and succeeds in capturing the island and one of the submarines. In the other submarine the hero's sister and his chief mechanic have undertaken their first submarine trip but are wrecked at the bottom of the sea. The brother obtains permission from his foe to attempt a rescue in the other submarine and does battle with the strange beasts and the stranger inhabitants in the depths of the ocean. Having rescued his sister he dives to the bottom in the one submarine remaining in order that his secret may perish with him. The picture is in color and has many notable miniature effects and skillful undersea photography.

For family audience including children.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

* Oh, Yeah!

Directed by.....*Tay Garnett*
Featuring.....*James Gleason*, *Robert Armstrong*

Story "No Breaks" by A. W. Sommerville

JAMES GLEASON and Robert Armstrong do excellent team work in this low life comedy as a pair of freight car brakemen. As inseparable pals and united in their opinion that no job is worth sticking to for any length of time, they arrive at a big railroad yard in the West where a waitress in the company restaurant and a girl time-keeper cause them to propose matrimony. The girls urge them to cease tramping the rails as casual laborers and to become steady brakemen with all year around jobs. With some difficulty and much humor they achieve this mighty aspiration after figuring as heroes in a runaway freight train. The scenery and the railroad life is as picturesque as these two characters are racy and the humor is easy and natural.

For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—7 reels)

Skin Deep

Directed by.....*Ray Enright*
Featuring.....*Monte Blue*, *Betty Compson*

Magazine story by Mark Edmond Jones

ANOTHER variation of the gangster plot. A mercenary cabaret girl marries a strikingly ugly gangster because she thinks he has the most money although she is more attracted to his rival. She is disgusted when her husband wishes to go straight, a thing he

has long wanted to do but felt handicapped by his repulsive appearance. His wife works with his rival and aids in a plot to frame him. He is sentenced to prison under the impression that the district attorney double-crossed him but succeeds in a daring escape only to suffer further mutilation of his face. A plastic surgeon takes him in hand and completely alters his appearance. He now sets out to be avenged on the district attorney but learns from him that his wife and his rival were fully responsible for his conviction. Later events make it possible for him to lead a different life.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—7 reels)

* They Had to See Paris

Directed by ..... *Frank Borzage*
Featuring ..... *Will Rogers*
Novel by Homer Croy

WILL ROGERS acting in the role of Pike Peters, an Oklahoma garage owner who strikes it rich in oil. His wife insists upon taking him to Paris where she tries to marry their daughter to a mercenary count. Pike Peters cannot see this at all and continually distresses his wife by boosting Oklahoma and making unconventional wisecracks about French life and the mob of society "down and outers" whom she has collected for her parties. He finally cures his wife by pretending to be fascinated by a French siren so that she is only too glad to return to the States. Will Rogers inimitable humor and splendid character acting makes this picture continually amusing.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—9 reels)

Three Live Ghosts

Directed by ..... *Thornton Freeland*
Featuring ..... *Beryl Mercer*, *Charles McNaughton*
Play by Frederick Isham

A COMEDY of three World War veterans who return home to England after having been reported as missing. Spoofy, the shell-shocked officer who is a victim of amnesia which results in his becoming a kleptomaniac, Jimmie Gubbins and an American, William Foster who left his home under a cloud and joined the British forces, are the "three live ghosts." They are not received with an undue amount of enthusiasm on their return, especially Jimmie, as his mother-in-law has been collecting his insurance and insists that he "stay dead" until she collects the next installment. There is a big robbery in a wealthy lord's house and among the objects missing is his baby and who should stroll down the street in meticulous morning clothes pushing a perambulator but Spoofy. This talking version of the popular stage play and silent picture abounds in humor, good acting and direction.

For family audience including young people.
(United Artists—9 reels)

The Unholy Night

Directed by ..... *Lionel Barrymore*
Featuring ..... *Roland Young*, *Ernest Torrence*
Original screen story by Ben Hecht

THE head of Scotland Yard has been called in to put a stop to a series of mysterious assassinations of which the officers of a certain British regiment have been the victims. He summons all the remaining officers and explains the danger which is threatening them. A deceased brother officer dismissed in disgrace from the regiment has just left them a large fortune and made them the guardians of a mysterious Oriental girl. The officers start quarreling over the money and engage in jealous rivalry for the favors of the girl, so that suspicion is directed in turn to each one of them. A denouement cleverly brought about by a spirit seance reveals the unsuspected culprit. Excellent direction and acting are combined with a clever story.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

The Very Idea

Directed by ..... *Frank Craven*
Featuring ..... *Frank Craven*
Play by William Le Baron

AN author who is writing a book on eugenics tries to put his ideas into practice on his friends. He persuades a childless couple to accept the prospective issue of their maid and his chauffeur whom he has selected for an ideal eugenic match. However when the baby is born its parents refuse to part with

it which causes great embarrassment to everyone concerned. A happy solution which the hitherto childless wife whispers to her husband providentially solves the difficulty.

For family audience including young people.
(RKO—7 reels)

*Why Bring That Up

Directed by.....George Abbott
Featuring.....Moran and Mack
Original screen story by Octavus Roy Cohen

THIS is frankly a vehicle to allow Moran and Mack, the two famous blackface comedians, to put on their well known acts. A complication to enliven the plot is added when a siren causes Moran to fall in love with her though her only object is to obtain his money. His partner comes to his rescue in the nick of time and the show is ready to go on again. There are some excellent backstage scenes of a musical comedy and the humor of Moran and Mack lends itself excellently to talkie presentation.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—10 reels)

Wise Girls

Directed by.....Frank Borzage
Featuring.....Elliott Nugent, Norma Lee
Stage play "Kempy" by J. C. and Elliott Nugent

ROMANTIC comedy of a middle class American family. The father and mother have tried to give their family all the "advantages they did not have," but the plan fails to prove altogether successful with the eldest daughter as her education seems to have given her a superiority complex. She is convinced that she is the great American novelist and that her surroundings are not those befitting one of her talents. The cost of printing her book has been borne, unknown to her, by her slightly older admirer and he is also going to star her in a musical comedy although it is quite obvious to everyone else that she can neither sing, act nor dance. There is a hectic family scene in the midst of which a timid youth comes to fix the plumbing. In a moment of bravery he confides to the older sister that he has just read the book which he sees and being unaware of the authoress, confesses that she is his ideal and dream and his ambition is to marry her. The situations that develop from this declaration are extremely amusing and the interest is held throughout. This is an unusually faithful transference of the original play and brings to the screen the elder Nugent and his son in the roles they played on the stage.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

NON-FEATURES

Airways of the Arctic

An interesting picture showing airplane views of the desolate wastes of the Arctic and giving a lesson in the building of an igloo.

For family audience including children.
(Fox—1 reel)

Audio Review No. 20

Blossoms; Exotic; Back.

For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Audio Review No. 21

Angles; Kitchen; Timber.

For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Albert Spaulding

(Vitaphone No. 797)

Two violin solos by Albert Spaulding—"Ave Maria" by Schubert and "Waltz in 'A'" by Brahms.

For family audience including children.
(Warner—1 reel)

Albert Spaulding

(Vitaphone No. 798)

Albert Spaulding playing "Minuet in 'D'" by Mozart and "Liebesfreud" by Kreisler on his violin.

For family audience including children.
(Warner—1 reel)

Baby Rose Marie

(Vitaphone No. 809)

Baby Rose Marie puts over some popular songs in the typical "do-de-do" fashion.

For family audience including children.
(Warner—1 reel)

Clowning the Game

(Sportlight Series)

Comedy in athletics through horseplay.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Guy Robertson

(Vitaphone No. 813)

Guy Robertson sings a lovely poem song, "High Water," with double exposure used to illustrate it.

For family audience including children.

(Warner—1 reel)

Oklahoma Bob Albright

(Vitaphone No. 810)

Bob Albright sings "Chloe" and a yodeling song, followed by a dance by his daughter.

For family audience including children.

(Warner—1 reel)

Overture of 1812

Tschaikowsky's "Overture of 1812" in celebration of the driving out of Napoleon from Russia, rendered with illustrations of the fighting and the burning of Moscow.

For family audience including children.

(United Artists—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 36

American Billygoat; Curacao; Dude Ranch.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 37

Gothis; Blarney; Vision; The Ripping Jolly Thames.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 38

Starfish; Hampton Court; Derby; Deauville.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Right Technique

(Sportlight Series)

Form in sports.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Running the Scale

(Sportlight Series)

Trout fishing with some gorgeous shots of scenery.

For family audience including young people.

(Pathe—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Alias the Bandit

Western with a juvenile hero. The hero's sister is in love with a man who disguises himself as a bandit in order to catch the real culprits and Bobby helps him effectively.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—2 reels)

Bouncing Babies

(Our Gang)

Juvenile comedy. The Gang enters a number of contests at a baby show.

For family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

The Bridegroom

Mark Connolly in a comedy concerning a timorous bridegroom.

For family audience including young people.

(R K O—1 reel)

The Golfers

An amusing comedy of a golf game with $10,000 as the stake and a very nervous man as one of the players.

For family audience including young people.

(Educational—2 reels)

Knights Out

Hilarious burlesque on the Knights of King Arthur's Round Table with Clarke and McCullough as the two knights assigned to rescue a maiden in distress.

For family audience including children.

(Fox—3 reels)

Ladies' Choice

Farce of a husband who hates automobiles and his wife's purchase of a second hand car.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—2 reels)

My Pony Boy

Cartoon with a song about a handsome cowboy.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—1 reel)

The Uncle

A middle-aged uncle, played by Mark Connolly, tries to help his nephew with his lessons and finds that he has forgotten a great deal.

For family audience including children.

(R K O—1 reel)

EVEN so conservative a publication as *The Journal of Education* pays attention to movie education nowadays. Under the department "Education in Action" in a recent issue the following appeared: "Movie theatre ushering has become a vocation in these days of 'palaces' and 'cathedrals' of the silver screen. Attendants are no longer an inconspicuous, incidental part of the mechanism of the movie house. An essential element in the decoration are the figures that stand about, statuesquely, primed for service. The uniforms they wear today have considerable to do with the new effect, but the uniforms alone do not make these men. Their snap and their air are the result of a required course of training. The material with which the training school works is handpicked for manners and looks and then drilled into the desired shape. To many attendants their job represents no more than a living. Some are college students using their spare time to finance their courses. Beginners are reminded of the possibility that some day they may become house managers."

THE Harvard Business School is installing projectors in its class rooms for the purpose of instructing the pupils by means of motion pictures. Films showing the various steps of the automobile business, from the growing of rubber in Singapore to the final distribution of cars to the dealers, are included in the pictures to be used. There will be films illustrating means of propaganda and marketing, in addition to many pictures of a highly technical nature which will be used to give the students the fine points of business.

"Talkies" at Sea

AN important milestone of progress, the first commercial installation of portable sound equipment, whereby talking pictures were shown on a great trans-Atlantic liner was celebrated just prior to a July sailing of the *Majestic* of the White Star Line. This forward step was made possible by the joint action of three great organizations. The first of these was the Electrical Research Products, Inc., subsidiary of the Western Electric and through it of the great New York Telephone and Telegraph Company, which after years of experimentation on the part of its engineers, had perfected an apparatus which made possible the showing of moving pictures on a vessel throbbing with energy and adapted to the requirements of ocean travel. Secondly, the White Star Line, which, after a long experience with moving pictures, had come to the conclusion that their passengers were entitled to the very latest, most up-to-date and ingenious contrivances which the motion picture industry afforded. This company had picked the great *Majestic,* flagship of its fleet, on which to make this experiment and installation of the first portable sound apparatus in the history of trans-Atlantic travel. Third, the Universal Pictures Corporation, which promised its latest and greatest pictures, fresh from pre-release runs on Broadway, pictures like *Showboat* and *Broadway,* to further this progressive move. A group of some two hundred officials of moving picture companies, mayors, judges, newspaper and magazine people, critics and publicists assembled in the Grand Salon of the *Majestic* to witness this epoch making prereview of *Broadway* on this new sound apparatus on the eve of the sailing for Europe which took Carl Laemmle, President of the Universal company, on his annual business and vacation trip to Europe. Mr. Laemmle had recorded his speech of the evening on Movietone and it was incorporated as a regular part of the program for the rest of the trip.

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The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

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A Scene from "Hallelujah" (*see page 5*)

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve witnout pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Presenting a Pioneer Member

It gives us great pleasure as second in our National Board series of Who's Who to introduce Dr. Albert T. Shiels. In spite of his many educational interests he has given constant active service to the National Board of Review over a long period of time. He was one of the original founders of the Board in 1909 *and he has continued through the years as a member of both the Executive Committee and the General Committee.* —Editor's Note.

Dr. Albert T. Shiels.

ALBERT T. SHIELS is a native son of New York where he was born July 9th, 1865. He is a product of its public schools and a graduate of the College of the City of New York in 1886. For nearly a decade beginning in 1890 he served as teacher in the schools of New York. With the establishment of a city-wide system, examinations were open to all candidates for principal and appointments made from the successful list in order of rank. He was the first principal appointed to the schools under this system.

In 1902 he was made a district superintendent and after three years' service was appointed to the supervision of the evening elementary and high schools of the city. With the approval and cooperation of the Superintendent of Schools he established a merit system for the appointment of evening school principals based on their record of service, reorganized the methods for teaching adult immigrants, and established a curriculum for adolescent and adult wage earners with advisory councils of employers and skilled artisans, to the end that instruction might more efficiently supplement the shop and office experiences of the pupils, so that they might become more useful as employees and more rapidly advance in their respective occupations. The published reports of this work have been frequently cited as pioneer contributions to vocational education.

New York University had but recently established a school of education. Dr. Shiels availed himself of this opportunity for post-graduate professional instruction and received the degrees of A.M. and Pd.M. Later, in recognition of his evening school work, Muhlenberg College awarded him the degree of Litt.D. Subsequently when the Department of Education in New York established a Bureau of Educational Research, Dr. Shiels was appointed as its director. During his incumbency the Bureau issued a succession of reports which were the subject of extended comment and approval by American educational authorities.

When the Board of Education of Los Angeles, California, asked the presidents of Chicago and Columbia Universities jointly to suggest three men to conduct a survey of the schools there, they nominated as one Dr. Shiels. As a result of the survey the Los Angeles Board requested Dr. Shiels to accept the office of superintendent of schools of that city in 1915. To any one seeking new experiences it was a tempting offer and he accepted it. Within two years the conditions incident to the entry of the nation into war suggested the need of a corresponding reorganization in education to which the schools of Los Angeles were among the first to respond. The war work of the schools, which was described in an official monograph, received generous recognition at Washington. As a mark of appreciation of this work, the French Government conferred upon Dr. Shiels the distinction of Officier d'Academie.

Once the new methods were in operation, a request was received from the National Council of Defense in New York for Dr. Shiels to organize that city into community councils for war work and for this he received a leave of absence. He found he had a double loyalty both to the city of his birth and to the city which then employed him. On a second request at the conclusion of the war to return to continue the work of the councils of New York, his desire to resign his Los Angeles position was granted. The generous recognition of his services on the coast has always been appreciated as one of the most pleasant experiences of his professional career. The work in the evening schools and in the Community Council had impressed the superintendent with the need of a consistent program of education for citizen training, not only for children, but for adults both foreign and native born. When the Inter-Racial Council invited Dr. Shiels to become its vice-president and subsequently its director, he accepted the position gladly, not least for the further opportunities of closer acquaintance with Americans of foreign birth who had participated so ably in the various war activities.

Two years after, Columbia University offered him the position of associate director in the Institute of Educational Research in Teachers College. A year later, upon the establishment of a professorship on the Schiff Foundation, he was appointed to that place, a position which he now holds as professor of education.

Dr. Shiels is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Geographical Society, a member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, of the Council on Foreign Affairs, and of the American History Teachers' Association. Dr. Shiels has always maintained an active interest in social welfare organizations.

"IT is too early to know just what the motion picture has done for our theatres," says Dr. George Pierce Baker, professor of drama at Yale University, "but of this I am sure—it has so thrown into unmistakable prominence the importance of the spoken word that dramatists, recognizing that they cannot compete with it, which depends upon mobs and vast scenic effects, have separated themselves more and more from melodrama and have turned to intimate, delicate characterization, the sort of thing which must find expression in perfect pantomime and speech. I believe the motion picture of the last twenty years has helped speech in the drama. Now we are faced with that so-called art form, the 'talkies' or 'speakies,' titles which in their infantile diminutives suggest their age. Here, however, is the beginning of a great invention. As yet those who are working with it admit to me they do not fully understand its possibilities."

Exceptional Photoplays

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers who are looking beyond what the popular theatres have to offer.

SECRETARY

Alfred B. Kuttner

EDITORS

Alfred B. Kuttner
Wilton A. Barrett

Hallelujah

Directed by ..... *King Vidor*
Photographed by ..... *Gordon Avil*

The Cast

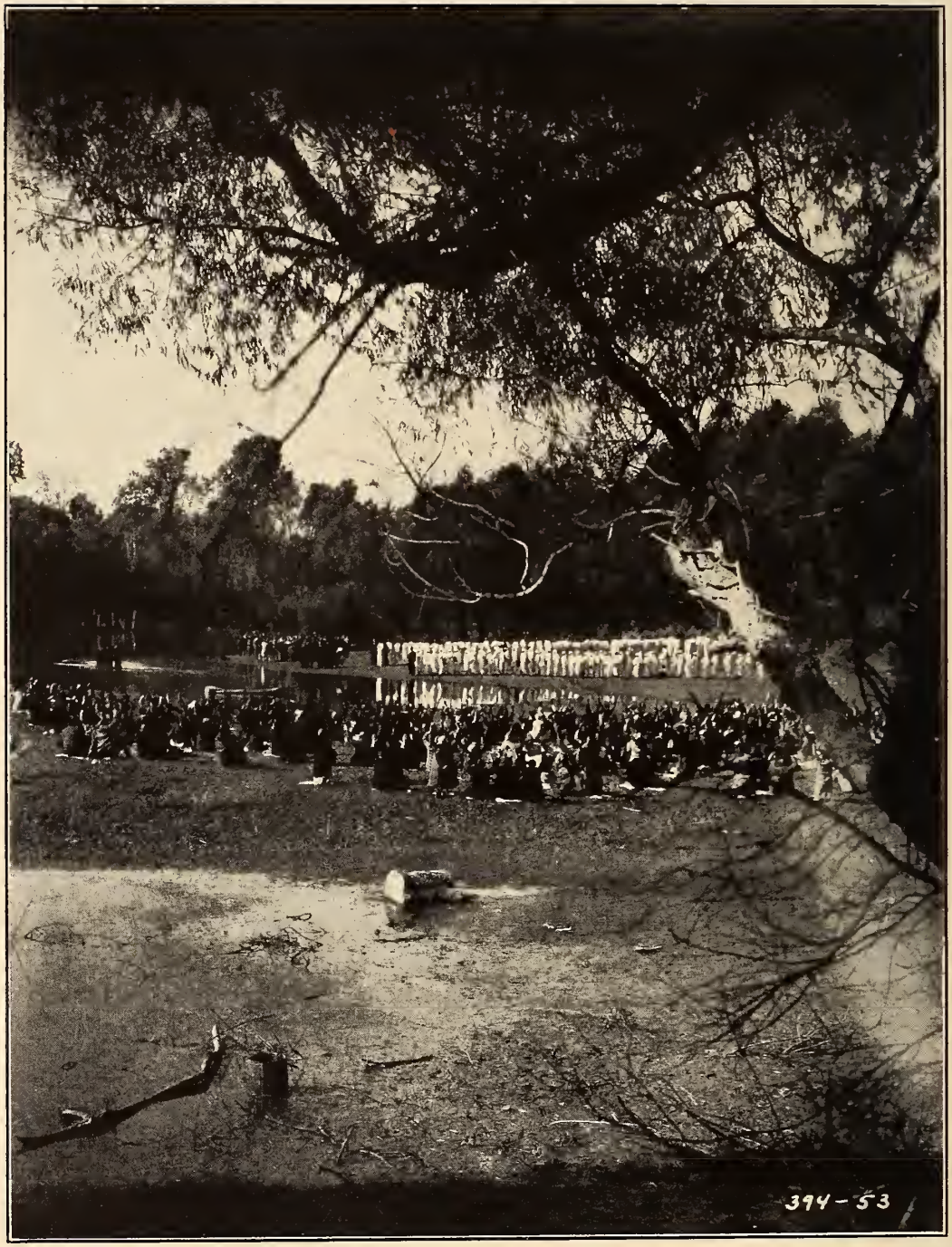
Zeke ..... *Daniel L. Haynes*
Chick ..... *Nina Mae McKinney*
Hot Shot ..... *William Fountaine*
Parson ..... *Harry Gray*
Mammy ..... *Fannie Belle DeKnight*
Missy Rose ..... *Victoria Spivey*

Original screen story by King Vidor

IT has been noticeable that the Negro for his pantomime, his voice, and his rich character appeal, is particularly effective in the talking film. Most of his talents have been disclosed in the "shorts"—the sound sketches. It was to be expected that soon a full length talking film would come along that would more fully and more importantly exploit the capabilities of Negro actors. But it was hardly to be hoped that so unique a portrayal of Negro life would make its appearance so soon as was to be the case in *Hallelujah.*

Here is a folk tale in the true sense of the word, a folk ballad. We have the hero of a tribe, one Zeke, adventuring through a gamut of spiritual experiences—those of love, religious conversion, remorse, bondage, things expressing the emotional range of his own people—and coming home after the long journey to find peace in regained freedom among those he loves. Like Jason he is not changed by anything that befalls in this excursion; he returns as he set out, not a god-like youth with a fleece of gold, it is true, but a whole man, a hero none the less, aware of his delivered heart and spirit, one who is no longer a wayfarer, though still with a banjo to proclaim his triumph and gladness. In place of the epic we have the ballad, but it tells the same story of a human passage through pitfalls and difficulties with the implication of a purpose achieved. It would be wrong to call this film a study of just Negro life on the plantation; its imagination has lyric and dirge-like notes, those of sorrow and exultation, rarely has a film been so moving, so awakening to our own responsive inner experiences; the plantation becomes the world and its characters become ourselves, its story on the human side is a universal one. In many ways it is an astonishing picture, it is also prophetic for its hints of a nobler form of motion picture for the future, a maturer concept of what motion accompanied by sound can bring to the screen.

It comes as something of a shock to hear issuing from this sound screen the language of dramatic poetry, a native speech eloquent with the color of idiom expressing the humor, the imagination, and the emotional depths of a people, as truly as does the speech of Sygne in the theatre of the stage. It makes one sit up and take notice, both for the possibilities of the talking film and because of the will to experiment, so refreshing, that led the producers to undertake the making of such a film as *Hallelujah.* It is trite to say that Hollywood can make pictures when it wants to. Despite the intelligentsia critics who lick their chops over its banalities and failures (and they have said many true and pungent things), Hollywood has had its *One Glorious Days, Underworlds, Big Parades* and *Sunrises.* But one must hope, since *Hallelujah* rises so far above the average, that this film may serve to recall to those selecting material for our na-



The Converted Are Baptized. Scene from "Hallelujah!"

tive screen the many opportunities missed, and possibilities dismissed, to confound by a little daring and newness those same critics.

The plantation Negro is a national figure, a character of plastic mould ready to the hand of the dramatist. Looking at *Hallelujah,* if we except Dudley Murphy's poignant and cinematic sound "shorts," *St. Louis Blues* and *Black and Tan,* only in it has the screen, sound or silent, dealt significantly with this rich material. This alone gives the film importance.

The action, divided into unit sequences, a structural form that for the present the sound film finds it hard to escape, coordinates with an almost classic precision of gaining effect, mounting through cumulative rhythms to its moments of intensity, or passing to its interludes of relief. Through it all the plastic figure of Zeke is felt, wearing this mask or that, in the harvest joy, in the childlike pursuit of pleasure, in the yearning moments with Missy Rose, in the savage surrender to Chick, and in all the pulsations of passion, exultation, remorse and longing that these entail. It is always a touching mask, worn by the face of a dignity that is fellow to the forthright child in man. Through the early scenes of the cotton fields, the plantation quarters, the river haunts after the cotton harvest is shipped, where the money of the pickers is spent, through the revival sequences with its grotesque Elijah, the magnificent sequence of the baptizing in the river, with its gorgeous pictorial array of the converted ones in their white robes on the dark, sad, far-stretching river banks, a composition arrangement as fine as the screen has given, and in the orgiastic shots of the church meeting, with their mounting rhythm of tossing black shadows involving pure motion to convey the savage naked darkness of their mood, Zeke moves overshadowingly, carelessly happy or tormented or ecstatic, giving the meaning of the children of the revivalist's God, the meaning of all children who in trouble and ignorance bow down to God and rise up and find in worship a madness.

Hallelujah is the accomplishment of fine direction seen through the filter of a pictorial beauty informed by feeling and power, before which is spread the vigor, fire and emotion of a superb company of actors whose natural technique harmonizes perfectly with the thematic and cinematic design. No taint of the mannerisms of sophisticated playing touches the humanness of this cast. From scene to arresting scene the picture passes to the ghostly swamp where Zeke avenges the taking away and loss of Chick by the murder of Hot Shot, the gambler, and there is no lapse in the living interest of the characters. The mobility of Daniel Haynes as Zeke, the grace and animal appeal of Nina Mae McKinney as Chick, the mysticism of the clairvoyant old mammy as projected by Fannie Belle DeKnight, the virtue of Missy Rose played by Victoria Spivey, the loud-mouthed coward, Hot Shot, of William Fountaine, and Everett McGarrity's gentle and adoring Spunk, Zeke's little brother, whose accidental killing by Zeke in the latter's attempt to get back the harvest money which Hot Shot has dishonestly won leads Zeke to his remorseful vision of one called by the Lord to preach the gospel of repentance, and furnishes some of the most moving scenes of the film—these characters, one and all, are portrayals which touch with genuine feeling the histrionic notes that give this remarkable film its cords of humanness and intensity.

To some it will seem that early sequences are obviously too planted in studio backgrounds, too full of instrumentation and minstrel noise, that too much has been given over to exigencies of sound recording. It would appear that Zeke's family were much given to close harmony and fancy shuffling just because the audience out front expected it of them. Again in other exterior shots the sound effects are allowed to intrude on the mood created by the silent harmony of the scenes themselves. Those of the loading of cotton on the river steamer, since the bank with the steamer and her busy gang-plank is considerably in the background, are so strident with a conglomeration of loud close-up noises meant to be those of cotton bales rolling, stevedores shouting, whistles blowing and orders being given that the effect is jarring and unnatural. It is a piling on of machine-made elements where the simple eloquent pictorial effect of the film, through its sheer cinematic motion, left to itself would give the sense of the accompanying varied noises.

These are minor faults in so grand a film. They indicate, however, that sound treatment is still a thing much to be pondered and experimented with. *Hallelujah* in this respect

A Scene from the Russian picture "Arsenal"

seems to point the way in its later sequences. Zeke plodding through the swamp after the frantic stumbling Hot Shot, with only the slush of waded water, is immensely effective with its menace. It is the best wedding of pictures, sound and silence that the screen has yet offered as an illustration of the point that the most effective use of the sound device is at those telling intervals in the lapse of silence where only sound can do what the moving image cannot. Another example of this is in the closing shots where the sound track is carried through successive scenes of the places which Zeke is passing on his way home. The tune of his banjo is heard continuously in the melody he is playing, as he sits on the roof of the moving train, as he walks through the fields to that moment of silence when he stands waiting for his family to see him. Here the sound knits the pictures together in a double meaning. In the song of the banjo we pass back with Zeke over what he has been through, and in the picture we go with him toward the plantation he longs to see again.

Produced and Distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation.

Arsenal

Directed by .....Alexander Dovzhenko
Photographed by.....D. Demutzki
Starring .....S. Svashenko
Screen story by Alexander Dovzhenko

ARSENAL is a poem, created in the motion picture medium by a Ukrainian who is both an idealist and a realist, and above all what is often called a modernist. In a way that seems peculiar to the Russian temperament he is disillusioned and mystical, tragically pessimistic and fierily optimistic. The picture he has made of the revolution in Ukraine is spiritually akin to "All Quiet on the Western Front". It reveals horrors and beauties, with a fierce kind of pity.

It is suggestive of Eisenstein and other Russian directors in some of its use of the camera, but in all other ways it is different from, and beyond, anything else that the Russians have done. For its particular kind of thing, that means it is beyond anything else that anyone has done.

It is singularly free from the thing we

usually call propaganda in the Russian pictures, the thing that is put there for the education of the Russian people because their motion pictures are a part of their educational system. There is only one injection of politics and policies—an argument over the possession of the land after Ukrainian independence was obtained. Otherwise there is almost nothing of a purposeful nature. It is merely the director's vision of the human struggle.

There is no story to it. One man—a soldier, magnificently acted by S. Svashenko—has a kind of individual existence in it, in the sense that we are permitted to follow him through some of the episodes of the revolution and we know what he is after. But he is a symbol far more than he is an individual—the symbol of man's struggle with his own ignorance, his blind fight for some driving ideal of knowledge and freedom that he feels with his soul but cannot define with his mind. He is continually defeated, and eternally undefeatable.

The whole picture is a continuous use of symbolism, but the symbols are people and actions, never the inanimate objects that we are accustomed to. Over and over again we see motionless figures—in a house, in the streets, in fields—which are signs of the way normal human living utterly ceases in times of war. A one-armed peasant with an old horse crosses a meadow and stops before a field of grain—a woman stands in the center of a room with crying children pulling at her skirts. A still picture of misery. Suddenly the peasant is beating his horse, the woman is beating the children, with a quick interchange of scenes that marvelously pictures the emotion of helpless people slashing out furiously at their own wretchedness.

A train carrying soldiers stops—the engineer explains that he cannot go farther because there is a dangerous down-grade ahead and the brakes are not working well. The soldier leader says confidently that they'll run the train themselves—they will be able to manage the brakes all right. The train is wrecked—and out of the smoking wreckage the soldier stumbles to his feet, muttering, "I'll learn to run these things yet!" Never in even the most violent anti-Soviet propaganda has there been such a vivid example of the disasters that follow power in ignorant hands.

The incidents of the picture are mostly unrelated, in the accepted continuity sense. We see a group of people—they do something and vanish from the screen, quite unconnected with what went before or comes after. Horses speak in titles. Spoken titles appear as if they were themselves pictures—their meaning is entirely within their words and it does not matter who spoke them: therefore we do not see, or know, or care, who spoke them.

All of this is a kind of technique that no other picture has prepared us for. It is difficult to adjust one's self to, because unconsciously everyone in a movie audience is all set for something at least approaching the usual kind of screen play. It is pretty sure to leave one bewildered at the first seeing of it, though the emotional power is even more sure to make an impression that is far stronger than the bewilderment. It is a picture that, like sublime music or poetry, gives up its meanings slowly, more and more eloquently and movingly the more often it is seen. It is so fine that repetition and familiarity do not dull it. The episode in which galloping horses carry a dead soldier across snow-covered plains to his home—and at the end of the ride there is a motionless woman standing by a new-dug grave as if she had always been waiting there, always knowing that only thus would her son come home—such an episode is as lovely and moving and eternally fresh as a movement in a Beethoven symphony. And it is only one among many episodes that put *Arsenal* in a niche all its own among motion pictures. It reaches a goal that only the silent screen could achieve. It makes one hope that its director will go on, along his own way, and leave the development of new inventions to others.

Produced by Wufku; Distributed by Amkino.

Disraeli

Directed by.....Alfred E. Green
Photographed by.....Clee Garles

The Cast

Disraeli .....George Arliss
Lady Clarissa Pevensey.....Joan Bennett
Lady Beaconsfield.....Florence Arliss
Charles—Lord Deeford...Anthony Bushell

DISRAELI refutes the oft repeated theory that the costume play or film, while it may be authentically correct, beautifully produced and of a high artistic value, undoubtedly proves of limited appeal as entertainment.

Foremost in a recital of this picture's merits

is of course the work of George Arliss in the part of Disraeli, the British Prime Minister in the reign of Queen Victoria. He seems to be almost the personification of the character as legend brings it to us, so finished and flawless is his portrayal. This result is due to his long familiarity with the part, since this is his second cinema version of a stage play in which he long starred, and because he brings to the screen a technique perfected through many years of acting and interest in all phases of the theatre.

George Arliss as Disraeli

There is a possibility that *Disraeli* might be adversely criticized upon this very score—that it is merely a photographed play and not a motion picture. But whatever the feeling about dialogue pictures in general there is now and then one which cannot fail to arouse ardent enthusiasm for this new form. Such a production as *Disraeli* ought, and will in great measure, cause a further respect for sound films, for it allows the suave and polished acting of Mr. Arliss, greatly intensified by the delicate shading of his voice, to be carried to an audience of millions.

Mr. Arliss appears to take so great a relish in the playing of his part that one cannot fail to feel that he himself is pleased with the sound films and this gives added enjoyment to the viewing of the picture. It may be paradoxical to say that Mr. Arliss plays with such an extreme naturalness that he fairly seems to be living the part before your eyes and at the same time to say that he seems conscious of a large and appreciative audience. This, however, is the impression gained. Perhaps it is because Disraeli is a role which portrays a vital and distinctive character in history, one vivid and living still in the minds of the many who are familiar with Disraeli's writings and the many volumes written about him. It is not a part such as Mr. Arliss played in *The Green Goddess,* an imaginary character, but a true personage and Mr. Arliss seems to be saying in his acting, "You may or may not favor Disraeli, this artful Prime Minister, but at least you are interested in him as a notable and unique historical figure, so how do you like my portrayal of him?" It is this enthusiasm coupled with the meticulous finish of the acting that gives a heightened distinction to the film.

An exceedingly able cast supports the star. The role of Lady Beaconsfield, the sympathetic wife, is admirably played by Mrs. Arliss. Joan Bennett as Lady Clarissa is so very charming and lovely that an overstressing in the picture of the romance between her and the young Lord Deeford, secretary to Disraeli, can easily be forgiven.

The particular incident in Disraeli's career which forms the plot is his desire to purchase the Suez Canal and thus gain control of India for England and make his Queen Empress of India. This purpose is looked upon as a mad and impractical fancy generally, and especially by the Bank of England from whose coffers the necessary funds for the transaction must be forthcoming. It is only by a most clever calling upon of all the forces of diplomacy and intrigue that Disraeli is able to achieve his scheme. The story ends in a flash of glory when Disraeli, the man whose name is on every tongue for the successful consummation of his plan, now seen as so favorable to England, is called before Queen Victoria at a great ball.

The settings not only in this scene but throughout are fitting backgrounds for the unfolding of the story. The wide expanse of panelled rooms and formal gardens help to maintain the atmosphere of cool and disinterested finesse with which the most vital matter is accomplished under the guise of a social chat over the tea cups.

Here is a picture which should undoubtedly, both because of its fine character work by a leading actor of the present time and its historical interest, be kept permanently available. *Produced and Distributed by Warner Brothers.*

Applause

Directed by.....Rouben Mamoulian
Photographed by.....George Folsey

The Cast

Kitty Darling .....Helen Morgan
April Darling .....Joan Peers
Hitch Nelson .....Fuller Mellish, Jr.
Joe King .....Jack Cameron
Tony .....Henry Wadsworth

Novel by Beth Brown

APPLAUSE, for the direction of which Rouben Mamoulian was brought to the studio from the Theatre Guild, shows much that is distinctive by way of retaining the cinematic method of the silent screen and applying it to the screen of the sound film. In this one perceives a further step in blending the technique of both in that composite method which apparently is to furnish the picture art of the future. Finished composition in the photography has been striven for and camera invention to a very large degree retained for the narrative manner. Quite apart from sound and dialogue effects, this film "says it with pictures." Here a great superiority has been achieved over most of the current talkies. Were sound omitted from *Applause,* it would still have coherence and a story-telling power of its own through its pictorial interest.

Miss Helen Morgan lends her own personality to the role of Kitty Darling, a trouper now past her heydey but still hugging the dream of being on the verge of a great success that will put her name in the electric lights. Miss Morgan's portrait of this woman, illiterate, not very bright, blunted by drink, craving the affection of her worthless consort, with her "plans" for the future of the daughter she has taken from a convent to bring up with her in the life of the cheap burlesque theatre, is an authentic and memorable one. The plot through which this character moves is time worn, turned into a little different shape here and there, with such things as a nice sailor boy in love with the sweet young girl who doesn't like mama's friends or mama's profession, but is bound to stick by mama just for company and loyalty's sake. The strings are pulled in the same old way and the mechanism of jazz and show girls, which proved so appealing to the populace in *Broadway Melody,* is not overlooked in the theatre sequences. But there is a difference, because these things are done with cinematic meaning as well as with sound enhancement. And the sound finds elaboration, and gains in naturalness, through subordinating to or mingling of dialogue with the pervading noises of the places where the action takes place.

Technically *Applause* is often surprising; the sound track has been carried through dissolves and fades and camera shifts with telling effect and gives almost the same flexibility aurally that the film possesses visually. The camera speech itself gets close to the virtuosity of a *Variety* or *The Last Moment,* and the speed, ease and fluidity of the film are among the marks of its cinematic virtue.

Helen Morgan in "Applause"

An able cast numbering Joan Peers, Fuller Mellish, Jr., and Henry Wadsworth, is capably handled before the mike, and the direction, given a story which is somewhat squalid and brutal, shows reluctance to over-state, dramatic judgment and tenderness. One of the loveliest sequences yet to find its way into the talkies is that composed of the shots of the boy and girl finding the shy utterance of their awakening love under the towering arches of Brooklyn Bridge, with the night sounds of the river coming up to them, becoming a part of their feelings, their reticent speech, so in keeping with their isolation, their shadowy selves, the dim city they have for this haunting and magic hour escaped.

Applause appears to be the product of much care, selection of material, and the aim of a competent director to make a good picture.

Produced and Distributed by Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation.

Mrs. Dan Everett Waid

A deep sense of sorrow was felt by all members of the National Board at the death of Mrs. Dan Everett Waid who had for years been a loyal supporter and an active participant in the work of the Board. She was a person of many activities and her interest was therefore doubly appreciated. At the time she became affiliated with the General Committee of the Board in 1916 *she was a member of the Woman's City Club, National Arts Club, Consumers' League, Council of Women for Home Missions, Joint Committee on Student Work and the Committee on Protestant Work at Ellis Island. A friend, upon request, has given us this biographical sketch which we offer to our readers with the assurance that they too will feel that the passing of a life which had been one of such wide service is indeed a loss.*—EDITOR'S NOTE.

MRS. DAN EVERETT WAID, prominent and highly honored through her connection with national organizations, died on June 11th, at her home in New York City.

An analytical mind, breadth of knowledge, keen humor, radiant personality, ability as an adviser, speaker and writer, together with unselfish devotion to each cause she undertook, were the rarely combined qualifications which made her service on commissions, boards and committees of national and international scope eagerly sought.

Mrs. Waid had recently been elected first vice-president of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, following long and invaluable membership on that board and its predecessor, the Woman's Board of Home Missions. Among her other affiliations were membership on the Council of Women for Home Missions, of which she was a charter member, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, National Commission of Protestant Women, General Committee of Immigrant Aid at Ellis Island, National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, National Board of Review of Motion Pictures and the Institute of Public Relations.

As a rarely gifted speaker on religious and educational subjects in her own denomination and interdenominationally she was widely known. Her lectures on mission study books at Northfield, Chautauqua, and other Summer Schools of Missions were given year after year with unabating interest.

As a writer she contributed stories, plays, pageants, hymns and was chairman of the committee on "Women and Missions," the magazine published by the Home and Foreign Mission Boards of the Presbyterian Church.

Her interest always went out especially to young people in New York who were away from home, and no summary can be made of the many contacts established through the charming hospitality of her city and her country home, which helped young men and women to establish themselves on a firm footing and face the right way.

Mrs. Waid, before her marriage Eva Mae Clark, was born in 1869 at Ottawa, Kansas, and was graduated in 1887 at Monmouth College, Illinois. In 1891 she became the wife of Dan Everett Waid, a classmate, now a leading architect of New York City, who during the years has in every way joined Mrs. Waid in her many wide forms of service.

THERE may be a time when moving pictures supplement the minister in the pulpit, according to the Reverend Harry J. Swan, director of religious education in the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Albany (N. Y.), who is conducting an experimental Sunday evening motion picture service in the church. "We find," he says, "that the moving picture program packs our auditorium, which is one of the largest in the city, every Sunday evening. Before the initiation of this program only a very limited number of members attended the evening service. I believe that a motion picture puts across the theme better than a man in the pulpit. People can learn more from the eye than from the ear. The artistic manifestations of a movie offer a better lesson than most ministers can effect. We have been merely conducting these movie sermons as experiments, but it appears from the large attendance we have that they are the thing of the future."

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

IT was the privilege of the National Board of Review staff to have visits with the following out-of-the-city friends of the Board during the past month: Mrs. E. M. Barsham, Motion Picture Chairman, Delaware State Federation of Women's Clubs; Mrs. Richard Price, Wilmington (Del.) Better Films Council; Mrs. Mina C. Brann, Motion Picture Chairman, Montgomery County, Maryland State Federation of Women's Clubs; Mrs. George C. Harrison, Motion Picture Chairman, Rhode Island State Federation of Women's Clubs; Mrs. Piercy Chestney, President, Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee; Mrs. John A. Selden, Junior Matinee Chairman, Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee; Mrs. Hugh A. Smith, Better Films Chairman, Rochester (N. Y.) Chapter, D.A.R. and Mrs. F. W. Clarke, Executive Director, Junior Film and Entertainment Guild of Albany, N. Y.

ONE of the very able state D. A. R. Better Films Chairmen is Mrs. Leon A. McIntire of the New Jersey Society. Her work during the past two years had received so much recognition that she was re-appointed by the new state regent. The latest plan sponsored by Mrs. McIntire for her state is a very comprehensive one and one which undoubtedly will lead to telling results for it is the organization of her chapter better films chairmen through the State into a Better Films Committee. These chairmen are to conduct their work locally as units of this State Better Films Committee, cooperating wherever possible with other groups of the community. The organization meeting was held on October 29th at the home of Mrs. McIntire in Newark. Following the successful working out of the details of organization the Committee will become affiliated with the National Board of Review.

The local Better Films Committee plan as effectively carried out in Rutherford, New Jersey, was outlined at this meeting by Mrs. Harry G. Grover, a member of the Executive Committee of the National Board and President of the Rutherford Better Films Committee. She suggested how the work could be conducted to meet best the needs of particular communities.

The picture *Evangeline* was indorsed as suitable for the entire family, being both of historical and educational value.

The committee will endeavor to have every New Jersey chapter purchase for its local schools and theatres a flag trailer, a three minute reel showing proper salute to the American flag and the oath of allegiance. Other work it will sponsor will be the promoting of juniors' matinees.

Mrs. McIntire was elected chairman of this new committee and Mrs. John D. Cummin, secretary.

THE most help from our magazine is gained, we believe, through the Better Films Forum where one Committee learns what another Committee is accomplishing and a new proof of this comes to us in a letter from Mrs. N. Irving Hyatt, Chairman, Spartanburg (S. C.) Better Films Committee, who says, "The Spartanburg Better Films Committee have found your Better Films Forum so very helpful that I thought possibly a report on our work here might not be amiss." We are indeed pleased to have this report, which follows, but we feel that Mrs. Hyatt has been much too modest in holding to a few sentences the fine work of her Committee. We hope for a more detailed report next time.

"The Spartanburg Better Films Committee has just completed its seventh year. During that time the Committee has reviewed all the pictures at the local theatres and after the reviews classified them in groups as suitable for adults and family but not for children under twelve years. These reports have been given to the public through the local papers. We have held weekly Saturday morning children's matinees of selected pictures with sometimes as an additional feature

to celebrate holidays a prologue, given by local talent. The children often receive souvenirs of candy or ice cream cones and pictures of their favorite movie star. The Boy Scouts have assisted in the patriotic programs by giving flag drills and leading the children in the singing of 'America.'

"The children of the Orphans' Home or the Probation Court are our guests for the Thanksgiving matinee. The Christmas matinee is free to every child bringing a small gift of fruit or candy for the Salvation Army Christmas baskets.

"We give at least one luncheon a year to the theatre managers and representatives of the press and when we are to have a speaker at our monthly meeting, we invite the public to attend. The theatres, the press and the public have given us their most loyal support always and we feel the work has not been in vain."

THE interest which has been evinced for some time in the communities of Ridgefield Park, Bogota and Teaneck of New Jersey in the better films movement has recently been crystallized into a definite Better Films Committee. The meeting called for the purpose of organization was held on October 17th, in the Roosevelt High School of Ridgefield Park. Representatives were present from the P.-T. A groups in all three of the communities and the enthusiasm shown in the formation of a Committee was such as to justify the promise of cooperation which had come to Mrs. A. C. Olson, of the Ridgefield Park P.-T. A., who has been the prime mover in maintaining interest in this phase of activities since it was first aroused last year at the Conference of the National Board. Mrs. H. G. Grover as Motion Picture Chairman of the Bergen County P.-T. A., presided as temporary chairman until the election of officers which resulted in the selection of Mrs. A. C. Olson, of Ridgefield Park, as president; Mrs. Fraser, of Teaneck, first vice-president; Mrs. Powers, of Bogota, second vice-president; Mrs. Minnie Marsh, of Ridgefield Park, secretary, and Mrs. Varnum, of Teaneck, treasurer.

It was the privilege of the Better Films Secretary to be present and bring a message to the meeting from the National Board. The services of the Board are most gladly extended to this Committee and congratulations upon the completion of the first step in the carrying out of an effective community plan.

MRS HAROLD J. HINMAN has been re-elected president of the Junior Film and Entertainment Guild of Albany (N. Y.). Other officers chosen were Mrs. Charles White Nash and Mrs. Joseph Gavit, vice-presidents; Mrs. Stephens, treasurer; Mrs. George H. Farlow, secretary, and Mrs. Frank W. Clark, executive director. Heads of Albany women's clubs have formed a committee to work with the Guild. The clubs co-operating are the Woman's Club, Albany Mothers' Club, Christian Mothers' Union, Council of Jewish Women, Catholic Daughters of America, Albany Lotus Club and the Mothers' Club of the Third Reformed Church. Efforts will be made by the Guild to have amended the state law barring children under sixteen years of age from attending theatres unaccompanied. Officers of the organization maintain that the law is in effect now in only the better class motion picture houses, and consequently many children are prevented from seeing motion pictures at their best. Several card parties are being planned for the benefit of the Guild's work of providing suitable films for Albany children.

THE officers elected by the Atlanta (Ga.) Better Films Committee for the year 1929-30 are Mrs. Newton C. Wing, president; Mrs. Louis Elsas, first vice-president; Mrs. Patrick Bray, second vice-president; Mrs. A. W. Waldman, recording secretary; Mrs. O. J. Dinkler, treasurer, and Mrs. Alonzo Richardson, parliamentarian. Mrs. Wing was honored for a third year as president. As one of Atlanta's best known club and community workers she has been able to interest civic, educational and cultural leaders in the better films work, proof of which lies in the fact that in 1928 there were 15 organizations represented by membership on the committee and at present there are 70.

We regret that we failed to give credit in our previous issue to "The Library Journal" for the use of the cuts illustrating the article on book-film tie-ups.

WHEN Shakespeare comes to the movies then indeed is it time to think of book-film relationship. Miss Marilla Waite Freeman, who is the Secretary of the Motion Picture Committee of the American Library Association and librarian of the Main Library, Cleveland Public Library, sends us the latest book-mark of the Cleveland Library on the picture *The Taming of the Shrew.* Since this is the first picture in which Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford have played together and is the first talkie, barring one, in which either has appeared and moreover presents Shakespeare in an entirely new medium it is foreordained to create much interest in the seeing of it. Perhaps following this interest will come that of reading about other "Katherines" and "Petruchios", so we are pleased to reprint in part this book-mark:

Taming of the Shrew

"An old Italian tale of love and mirth; How pretty Katharine that was a Shrew, Dismay'd all suitors till she met with one . . . Who shamed her into meekness."

—*Shakespeare.*

Shakespeare's great comedy and
some actors who have played in it
Reading suggested by the
CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

A New Katharine and Petruchio

Talmey Doug and Mary

Katharines of Other Days

ELLEN TERRY
Terry Story of my Life
CLARA MORRIS
Morris Life on the Stage
JULIA MARLOWE
Russell Julia Marlowe
ADA REHAN
Izard Heroines of the modern stage
Winter The wallet of time vol. 2

Petruchios of the Past

EDWIN BOOTH
Winter Booth as Petruchio, in "Shakespeare on the Stage"
JOHN DREW
Drew My years on the Stage
OTIS SKINNER
Skinner Foot Lights and Spot Lights
SIR HERBERT BEERBOHM TREE
Tree Thoughts and Afterthoughts

Plot, Characters and Staging

JAMESON Shakespeare's Heroines
MACKENZIE The Women in Shakespeare's Plays
MACLEOD Shakespeare's Story Book
ODELL Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving
WINGATE Shakespeare's Heroines on the Stage
WINTER Shakespeare on the Stage

WITH the recent observance of the birthday of Theodore Roosevelt on October 27th, we were reminded to tell our readers again of the fine library of films owned by the Roosevelt Memorial Association. This library has been compiled through the exhaustive efforts of Miss Caroline Gentry, Director of Films of the Association, who has succeeded in assembling practically all the surviving negatives actually made of Colonel Roosevelt. It includes such historic events of Roosevelt's administration as the building of the Roosevelt Dam, the construction of the Panama Canal and covers almost every phase of his life and work. In the arranging, reproducing and editing of this material, Miss Gentry accomplished another praiseworthy piece of work.

The Association now has a library of 11 films and showings are held daily in Roosevelt House attended by club members, school children, foreign visitors and others interested in this national historic figure. Prints of the films have been widely distributed by the Y. M. C. A. Motion Picture Bureau and the latest development of the Film Department of the Roosevelt Association is the reproduction of the films on 16 mm. stock for home use. Eight prints are now available, among the titles in both stocks are *Roosevelt, Friend of the Birds, Roosevelt, the Great Scout, The River of Doubt* and *Roosevelt at Home.*

An example of the widespread interest in these films was recently witnessed at the Roosevelt booth in the Exposition of Women in Arts and Industries at the Hotel Astor, New York City, the week of September 30th-October 5th. The opportunity was given to the National Board of displaying its literature and services in the Roosevelt booth. The National Board was deeply appreciative of this courtesy, not only because it was an indication of interest in the Board's work but because it offered a further chance to learn of the important film work of the Roosevelt Association which demonstrates how much the motion picture can do in causing history and biography to live.

All those interested in knowing more of these films can be assured of the most willing service by writing to Miss Caroline Gentry, Roosevelt Memorial Association, 28 East 20th Street, New York City.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
FRANCES C. BARRETT

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

*—*Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

Behind the German Lines

A PICTURIZATION of the World War from the German standpoint and compiled through the courtesy of the German authorities. An unbiased recital of the events leading up to the War and the four years of struggle. Both the Army and Navy are shown in action and the movement of troops are made more vivid by the use of figures on a map. An excellent picture for educational purposes and historic use.

For family audience including children.
(Paramount—9 reels)

Broadway Scandals

Directed by.....*George Archainbaud*
Featuring.....*Sally O'Neil, Jack Egan*
Original screen story by Howard J. Green

ALTHOUGH this story of back stage life offers nothing new in the way of a plot, it does contain much entertaining material. Jack Egan who plays the hoofer has a very pleasant voice and the several songs he sings are well done. The story concerns the love of two members of a vaudeville team for each other. The girl, finding she stands in the way of her partner's success, breaks up the act and he becomes the leading man in a musical revue whose star is much attracted by him. The girl takes a job in the chorus and they are brought together again.

For family audience including young people.
(Columbia—9 reels)

Darkened Rooms

Directed by.....*Louis Gasnier*
Featuring.....*Evelyn Brent*
Novel by Philip Gibbs

PENNILESS and hungry a girl wanders into a photographer's at an amusement park and is befriended by him. The young man decides to give up photography and go in for occultism. Knowing the business is a fake, the girl undertakes to cure the boy of his love of the occult. She plays a practical joke and when he believes that he is really in touch with the spirit world he decides to give up his plan to become rich and goes back to his dark-room. The plot is simple, but holds the interest and the acting of Evelyn Brent is excellent.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—7 reels)

Evidence

Directed by.....*John Adolfi*
Featuring.....*Pauline Frederick, Conway Tearle*

Play "Divorce Evidence" by J. D. McPherson

AN English society divorce drama presented by an excellent cast. A young matron, the wife of a lawyer of repute, finds herself compromised by a former lover who had carefully arranged a plan to get her in his hotel room at night. Upon this evidence she is divorced by her husband and is thenceforth pointed out as a notorious lady. She bears the false accusation and scandal with gallantry but is heartbroken at being separated from her small son. After a few years she manages to see him again and later being proven innocent by a confession of the villainous lover is able to take her place in her home and in society. The lover is ably portrayed by Lowell Sherman and Conway Tearle plays well the part of a family friend who endeavors to heal the breach.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—8 reels)

His Glorious Night

Directed by ..... *Lionel Barrymore*
Featuring ..... *John Gilbert*

Play "Olympia" by Ferenc Molnar

A DELIGHTFULLY sophisticated tale of the havoc that a very good looking captain plays with the heart of a haughty princess. He tells her many times that he loves her and her eyes say a great deal on the same subject but she has her name, her country and her high-born fiance to think of. Acting on the sensible advice of Mama, she tells the captain in a most cruel fashion how mad he is to aspire to the love of a princess. He plans his own little joke, causing the report to be circulated that he is really a notorious swindler and, woe to the princess, he has her two letters and ring in his possession. The dialogue is all very entertaining and the members of the cast give excellent performances.

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Is Everybody Happy?

Directed by ..... *Archie Mayo*
Featuring ..... *Ted Lewis*

Original screen story by J. Johnson

INJURED in the World War, a famous violinist forced to give up his music, brings his son to America to make a great musician of him. The youth finds that there is no room for his kind of music in jazz-crazed America. He meets a girl and through her gets a job in a cafe but when his father discovers the kind of music his son is playing he disowns him. However, he comes to appreciate jazz also and so they are happily reunited.

For family audience including children.

(Warner—8 reels)

The Isle of Lost Ships

Directed by ..... *Irvin Willat*
Featuring ..... *Virginia Valli*, *Jason Robards*

Novel by Crittenden Marriott

ONCE again this romance of the sea comes to the screen. Several years ago a silent version of *The Isle of Lost Ships* was produced with Anna Q. Nilsson and Milton Sills playing the leads. Three oddly assorted persons, a young girl, a police officer and a young naval officer, charged with murdering his wife, are ship-wrecked and finally drift to an isolated island where all vessels are supposed to drift eventually. Here they have many adventures, but are glad to escape in a submarine which they find. The young officer is cleared of the murder charge and he and the girl with whom he has gone through so much, find happiness.

For family audience including young people.

(First National—9 reels)

Jazz Heaven

Directed by ..... *Melville Brown*
Featuring ..... *Sally O'Neil*

Original screen story by Pauline Forley and Douglas Murphy

HAVING written a song and been unable to get recognition, a boy and his sweetheart bribe a night watchman at a piano factory to allow them to use the piano for practise and by mistake they get into the radio room and their song is broadcasted. The radio station receives so many requests for the song that they investigate the matter and eventually find the two who are unaware of any knowledge that they have been "on the air." Of course, fortune smiles on them and they plan their future together.

For family audience including young people.

(RKO—7 reels)

The Kibitzer

Directed by ..... *Edward Sloman*
Featuring ..... *Harry Green*
Play by Robinson and Swerling

TRYING to run other people's business gets a Jewish man into plenty of trouble. Scorning the love of an honest boy, the man's daughter decides to marry a wealthy man who comes often to her father's store. To keep his daughter from eloping the father goes to the man's house only to discover he is a crook. As a reward he is given the handling of some stocks and through sheer luck makes good. The girl decides the poor but honest boy is the one she should marry and so all is well.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—9 reels)

Love, Live and Laugh

Directed by ..... *William K. Howard*
Featuring ..... *George Jessel*
Story "The Hurdy-gurdy Man" by Leroy Clemons and John B. Heyman

AN Italian boy is recalled to Italy on the death of his father and while there Italy enters the World War and he is not allowed to return to America. He is blinded and spends three years in a prison camp. Back in America, the girl he loves is told that he is dead and after a while she marries a doctor with whom she has worked. When the boy returns to America he is cured by the doctor and the girl discovering his identity offers to tell her husband but he, out of gratitude and realizing she is happy in her new love, goes away.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—9 reels)

Marianne

Directed by ..... *Robert Leonard*
Featuring ..... *Marion Davies*
Original screen story by Dale Van Every

THIS musical war comedy was chosen for Marion Davies' introduction to the sound pictures and it seems to have been a wise choice for as the peppery French peasant girl, Marianne, she is quite good. Marianne dwells in a little cottage not far behind the front lines so she finds American doughboys continually camping at her doorstep. She feeds them, entertains them and scolds them in wholesale fashion until one with a particularly good singing voice finally succeeds in getting individual attention. But when he makes off with her pet pig, the last of the lot which is being reserved for the General, he almost loses his place of honor. Marion Davies manages a very acceptable French-American dialect and her singing too is in keeping with the part. And in going "talkie" she has not entirely neglected pantomime and provides some entertaining imitations of Sarah Bernhardt, Maurice Chevalier and others.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—13 reels)

* Married in Hollywood

Directed by ..... *Marcel Silver*
Featuring ..... *Norma Terris*, *J. Harold Murray*
Viennese musical comedy by Harlam Thompson

A CHARMING musical romance. One is ever appreciative of Norma Terris' lovely voice and several times during the picture she delights the audience with her songs. The story tells of the love of an American prima donna and the prince of a country where she is performing. The prince's mother separates them and the singer, heartbroken, leaves for America where she becomes a success in the talkies. Meanwhile, the prince and his family are forced to flee when their subjects revolt. He works his way to America and lands in Hollywood and in a very romantic manner the two are reunited. It is a beautiful production and well worth seeing.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—11 reels)

The Mississippi Gambler

Directed by ..... *Reginald Barker*
Featuring ..... *Joseph Schildkraut*
Original screen story by Karl Brown and Leonard Fields

AN unusual story, smoothly told and well acted. On a Mississippi River boat a gambler succeeds in winning from a Southern gentleman a large sum of money which he was holding in trust. To save him from dishonor, his daughter begs the gambler, who has already fallen in love with her, to return

the money. He suggests they play for it, she betting the locket she wears which symbolizes her love. When she lays down her cards, he tells her that she wins, but later she finds that he held a better hand. Next day the gambler leaves the boat and as it sails away a package, containing the locket, is delivered to him.

For family audience including young people.
(Universal—6 reels)

* Mister Antonio

Directed by ..... *James Flood* / *Frank Reicher*
Featuring ..... *Leo Carrillo*
Play by Booth Tarkington

THIS sympathetic and moving portrayal of an Italian-American hurdy-gurdy man marks the initial screen appearance of Leo Carrillo, a dialect actor well known on the stage. At the spring of the year "Mister Antonio" closes his New York flower shop and with his hurdy-gurdy takes to the open road—the road of beauty and adventure. Rescuing a pretty young lady in distress, driven from her home by a sanctimonious uncle who thinks her fondness for a little gayety will ruin his chance for re-election as mayor of the town, proves to be quite a happy as well as thrilling experience. There is a deal of homely philosophy in the picture delivered in an appealing lingo and if we wanted to point a moral we might say it is a lesson in human understanding.

For family audience including children.
(Tiffany—7 reels)

The Racketeer

Directed by ..... ~~*Paul Gangelin*~~ Howard Higgin
Featuring ..... *Robert Armstrong* / *Carol Lombard*
Original screen story by Paul Gangelin

AN interesting drama of two men who love the same woman. A leader of a criminal gang who is known for his generosity to the needy, meets a beautiful woman at a gaming party given for charity and becomes interested in her when he detects her cheating at cards. He learns that she is in need of money to help her lover fight the drug habit and to get him back to his musical career. The racketeer helps them but falls in love with the woman and she out of gratitude to him and because of a false idea that she might stand in the way of her lover's career as a great violinist, consents to marry him. But on the eve of her marriage she discovers what she means to the musician and goes to tell the racketeer that she can not marry him but is saved from this confession when a member of his own gang interferes.

For family audience including young people.
(~~Paramount~~ Pathe—7 reels)

The Return of Sherlock Holmes

Directed by ..... *Basil Dean*
Featuring ..... *Clive Brook*
Novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

HAVING retired from Scotland Yard, Holmes is loathe to become a detective again but to help a friend he undertakes the case of a man who has been murdered and his son kidnapped. The search for the missing boy takes Sherlock Holmes and the daughter of his friend, who is engaged to the boy, on board a trans-Atlantic liner and there through the means of a dictaphone he finds the boy and captures the criminals.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

* Rio Rita

Directed by ..... *Luther Reed*
Featuring ..... *Bebe Daniels* / *John Boles*
Musical comedy by Guy Bolton and Fred Thompson

RIO RITA with all its gorgeous settings and magnificent costumes is brought straight from the Ziegfeld stage to the screen. The result, as is to be expected, is the most colorful and lavish of the musical comedy films. The singing and acting on the part of the principals are very well done with Bebe Daniels making a charming Mexican girl and displaying a lovely voice, and John Boles, with his fine voice, as the American who saves Rita from the clutches of the villain. In addition, the dancing of the chorus and the chatter and antics of the comedians delight the audience throughout the film. The result is a melodious, lovely spectacle well worth seeing.

For family audience including young people.
(R K O—15 reels)

Senor Americano

Directed by ..... *Harry J. Brown*
Featuring ..... *Ken Maynard*
Original screen story by Helmer Bergman

A PLEASING romance of early California before the annexation. A young American comes secretly to a ranch to learn conditions there and falls in love with a beautiful senorita and though he is not allowed to tell her who he really is he returns later with the good news of the annexation. Ken Maynard sings very pleasingly and the picture holds the interest throughout.

For family audience including children.
(Universal—7 reels)

The Siren of the Tropics

Featuring ..... *Josephine Baker*
French production

THE negro dancer, Josephine Baker, who a few years ago created such a sensation by her dancing in Paris has here been made the star of a motion picture story for the purpose of giving a camera presentation of her dancing. The film was produced in France and has as a background a number of scenes from the Follies Bergere in Paris. The plot concerns a native girl in one of the French provinces who comes to Paris to seek the white man for whom she has formed an attachment, after saving his life following the villainous scheme of his enemy, a mine superintendent. Her dancing attracts the attention of a theatrical manager and this brings her fame, but she is not content until she succeeds in her quest for the man. However when she does find him she gives him up to his fiancee. The picture would have been of greater interest in the heydey of the Charleston and the Black Bottom dances but it is interesting to see this kind of dancing by one who understands the spirit of it. Also her acting is good in the comedy parts.

For family audience including young people.
(Gold Talking Pictures—7 reels)

Skinner Steps Out

Directed by ..... *William James Craft*
Featuring ..... *Glenn Tryon*
Novel by Henry Irving Dodge

URGED by his young wife a man asks his boss for a raise and is immediately fired. In the meantime, his wife feeling sure they will have the extra money, goes shopping. Trying to live up to his wife's illusion of him, the husband through sheer nerve and determination finally makes good.

For family audience including young people.
(Universal—7 reels)

So This Is College

Directed by ..... *Sam Wood*
Featuring ..... *Elliott Nugent*, *Robert Montgomery*
Original screen story by Al Boasberg and Delmar Dazes

SO THIS IS COLLEGE may not be very academic but it is more authentic than many pictures purporting to show college life. We see fraternity house comradery, foot-ball rallies, proms, sophomoric love affairs and other activities quite as vital as studies in any college. All this is the background for the story of two students who are classmates, fraternity brothers and members of the football team and share for each other a great friendship and admiration until it comes to the matter of girls and then it is a case of "all's fair in love." One flirting co-ed nearly causes the loss of the big game of the season but her duplicity is found out and women are renounced forever. There is much amusing comedy and some first rate shots of football field and grand stand.

For family audience including children.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

A Song of Kentucky

Directed by ..... *Lew Seiler*
Featuring ..... *Lois Moran*, *Joseph Wagstaff*
Original screen story by Frederick H. Brennan

JERRY, a young song writer, falls in love with Lee Coleman, a wealthy Southern girl. She is being forced into marriage with a fortune hunter who upon learning of her infatuation pays a former vaudeville partner of Jerry's to frame him. Stunned by what she believes to be the truth, Lee goes back to Kentucky and there she makes a wager with her would-be fiance that if her horse does not win the Derby she will marry him. She loses her wager and on the eve of her wedding she slips away to attend a concert where Jerry directs his own symphony. At the close of

the concert the girl who had caused the trouble confesses and so Lee and Jerry are happy.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—8 reels)

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* Sunny Side Up

Directed by ..... *David Butler*
Featuring ..... *Janet Gaynor*, *Charles Farrell*
Original screen story by De Sylva, Brown and Henderson

JANET GAYNOR is just as enchanting in the talkies as she has been in the silent films. Both she and Charles Farrell lose none of their charm when they become audible on the screen. The story tells about a poor little girl who offers to make the rich young man's sweetheart jealous, although she is in love with him herself. The plan works beautifully but the man finds he really loves the little girl after all. The plot furnishes ample opportunity for much good comedy and some fine singing and dancing.

For family audience including children.
(Fox—12 reels)

Sweetie

Directed by ..... *Frank Tuttle*
Featuring ..... *Nancy Carroll*, *Helen Kane*, *Jack Oakie*
Original screen story by George Marion, Jr., and Lloyd Corrigan

IT is to be expected that the musical comedy type of picture will have the musical comedy type of plot, and *Sweetie* has a very ridiculous little story to bind together some very fine and amusing material. A chorus girl, angered by her college sweetheart's postponement of their marriage until after the football season, seeks revenge when she inherits the college. But the story is unimportant. Throughout the film we are treated to some unusually catchy songs by Helen Kane, Jack Oakie and Nancy Carroll, some good dancing and much highly amusing comedy, especially by Jack Oakie, who knows how to make an audience laugh.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—12 reels)

* The Taming of the Shrew

Directed by ..... *Sam Taylor*
Featuring ..... *Mary Pickford*, *Douglas Fairbanks*
Play by William Shakespeare

THE first of Shakespeare to appear in the talkies. Douglas Fairbanks, with his ever boisterous spirits, succeeds in imparting some of the play's merry hilarity to the screen version. The dialogue is taken from the lines of the play and is well delivered. Mary Pickford as the shrew is too dainty, perhaps, but she does manage to look very intimidating and Fairbanks as the gentleman who sets out to tame her efficiently turns her into a sweet smiling girl. The film is beautifully produced with very lovely settings throughout.

For family audience including young people.
(United Artists—8 reels)

The Thirteenth Chair

Directed by ..... *Tod Browning*
Featuring ..... *Margaret Wycherly*, *Conrad Nagel*
Play by Bayard Veiller

THE talkies, of course, add many thrills to the mystery story which were unknown to the silent film. We can have a perfectly dark screen with eerie sounds and shots and cries issuing forth which send the shivers up and down our spines. In this picture is the oft used method of discovering the murderer by re-enacting the scene of the crime in order to frighten a confession from the guilty person. The guests at the seance during which the murder was committed are placed in exactly the same positions they occupied before and the same proceedings followed. So out go the lights and the voice of the medium comes forth, then a shriek and all confusion. The acting of Margaret Wycherly in the role of the medium is especially fine.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—8 reels)

The Virginian

Directed by ..... *Victor Fleming*
Featuring ..... *Gary Cooper*, *Mary Brian*
Novel by Owen Wister

THIS picture has a freshness and charm which delights the spectator. We cannot think of another actor who would better

fit the part of the tall, lanky, slow-speaking Virginian than Gary Cooper. And Mary Brian is well cast as the earnest little school mistress who wins his heart when they meet in the crude western town. There is such a complete lack of studied effect in the film that we find ourselves very much interested in all that goes on from beginning to end.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—12 reels)

Welcome Danger

Directed by ..... *Clyde Bruckman*
Featuring ..... *Harold Lloyd*
Play by Aaron Hoffman

A BOY goes to California to join the police force where he becomes the laughing stock of the force until he captures the "Dragon," the evil spirit of Chinatown, and they recognize his worth. Although this story which is the star's first "talkie" begins with the usual Harold Lloyd humor, plenty of laughs, a boy and girl romance, the picture becomes tiresome as it develops and is not up to the usual calibre of the productions made by this clever comedian.

For family audience including children.

(Paramount—12 reels)

Woman to Woman

Directed by ..... *Victor Seville*
Featuring ..... *Betty Compson*, *George Barraud*
Play by Michael Morton

A STORY of a woman's sacrifice. About to be married a French girl receives word from her fiance, a young English officer, that his leave has been cancelled and he asks her to wait for him. After the war she takes her baby and goes to England to sing. At the theatre the English officer who returning from war with loss of memory, had married hears her sing and his memory returns. Not being able to persuade his wife to give him a divorce he plans to go away with the woman he loves and their son. The wife then goes secretly to the woman and convinces her that it will ruin her son's life if she runs away with a married man and offers to take the child and bring him up as her own. For love of her son she consents but dies of a broken heart.

For the mature audience.

(Tiffany—9 reels)

Young Nowheres

Directed by ..... *Frank Lloyd*
Featuring ..... *Richard Barthelmess*
Short story by I. A. R. Wylie

HERE is a picture for those decrying the prevalence on the screen of lavish musical shows and crime plays. It is an appealing tale of a timid young elevator boy and his sweetheart told with very little change of scene, no singing or musical interludes but depending entirely for its appeal upon the sympathetic characterization portrayed by Mr. Barthelmess. The young man, hard working, poor and bashful, never expects romance to come into his life but it does when a maid in the same apartment house where he is elevator boy confesses a secret liking for him. The difficulty is to find any place where they can be together for their little free time; crowded park benches and beaches serve until cold weather comes. In desperation on Christmas eve the young man plans a little party, the kind of which they had dreamed, in the apartment of an absent tenant but he is caught and brought to justice and the picture we see is the story to the judge. The role is one particularly suited to the star and reminds one of some of his best work in earlier productions.

For family audience including young people.

(First National—7 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

Applause

(See page 11)

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Arsenal

(See page 8)

For family audience including young people.

(Amkino—7 reels)

Disraeli

(See page 9)

For family audience including young people.

(Warner—9 reels)

Hallelujah

(See page 5)

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—12 reels)

The Trespasser, starring Gloria Swanson, will be reviewed in the Exceptional Photoplays Department of the forthcoming issue.

NON-FEATURES

Audio Reviews No. 22-28

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Black and Tan

Tragedy of a negro dancing girl who dies when she tries to dance in order to help the man she loves.
For family audience including young people.
(RKO—2 reels)

Boyhood Memories

(Sportlight Series)
Sports of school boys and girls in the country.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Flinging Feet

Fine color film showing dances of various nations, many performed by children.
For family audience including children.
(Castle—1 reel)

Follow the Leader

(Sportlight Series)
Extraordinary underwater swimming scenes.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Gridiron Glory

(Sportlight Series)
Excellent scenes of football plays and crowds.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Jungle Drums

A technicolor scenic showing an elephant hunt and the natives' revenge on a lion for the death of their chief.
For family audience including children.
(Tiffany-Stahl—1 reel)

Mandalay

Song sketch with singing by James Stanley, picturing the lure of India upon four British soldiers, based on Rudyard Kipling's poem.
For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Oh! You Beautiful Doll

Cartoon song of the old popular number.
For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Pathe Review No. 39

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For family audience including children.
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Pathe Review No. 40

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For family audience including children.
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For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

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To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. IV, No. 10 December, 1929

A Scene from "The Little Dutch Tulip Girl" (*see page* 5)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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A Member With Many Interests

As the third presentation in our Who Who's of the National Board, we introduce Dr. Myron T. Scudder, the Treasurer of the National Board of Review. Dr. Scudder, besides fulfilling his duties as treasurer of the National Board continues to give in many ways the faithful service which he has contributed for years as a member of the Executive Committee.—Editor's Note.

DR. MYRON T. SCUDDER was born in India in 1860, and is a grandson of the famous pioneer medical missionary, Dr. John Scudder who went to Ceylon in 1819. Dr. John Scudder had eight sons and two daughters, all of whom became missionaries. Many of the third generation and several of the fourth, all born in India, followed the example of their illustrious grand-ancestor.

Dr. Myron T. Scudder

However, Dr. Myron Scudder did not like so many others return to the land of his birth as a missionary. Instead of entering the ministry he became a teacher. Coming to America at an early age, he attended school in New Jersey, Ohio, California and later the Adelphi Academy in Brooklyn and entered Rutgers College, from which he was graduated in 1882. Here he was especially interested in history and Greek, making an elaborate translation of Aristophanes' Birds, and rendering odes of Pindar and Sappho in metrical English. In his senior year, he translated the entire Antigone of Sophocles. Later he pursued post graduate studies at Yale and Clark University.

Entering the field of education after leaving college he served as Principal of a number of schools covering a period of 25 years, following which he became Professor of Education at Rutger's College. He gave extended courses in education at New York University School of Pedagogy, and in the summer schools of the University of

Maine and the University of Virginia, and lectured at Wellesley, the University of Wisconsin and the University of Pennsylvania. Meanwhile his pen had not been idle, and he wrote the New York Supplement to Frye's Geography, New York: Its State and Local Government, Recreation for Rural Communities, at the same time he was contributing articles, monographs and chapters to the Outlook, the Proceedings of the Playground Association of America, the Annals of the American Academy of Social and Political Science, Play and Athletics for the Virginia Public Schools, and other mediums for the discussion of manual training, the newer phases of educational theory and practice, and recreation, with special reference to recreation in rural communities.

Since 1911 he has been President of Scudder School in New York City. In this school for girls which was founded in 1895 as the Froebel Normal Institute, Dr. Scudder has with marked success put into practice many of his ideas and ideals regarding education.

In his college days, Dr. Scudder was one of three to organize the Rutgers Glee Club which has persisted without a break to the present. Always prominent in athletics, he was half-back on the football team, and captain and catcher of the Varsity ball nine. Against City College of New York he drop-kicked fifty-two yards for a goal, which won the game for Rutgers just as time was called. That kick held the record for eleven years.

With such a background as an athlete it is natural that Dr. Scudder should be interested in organizations that make for wholesome outdoor life and sports. He was one of the founders of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, and one of the early promoters of scouting. He is still serving on the National Council of the Boy Scouts. He is also a member of the Board of Directors and Treasurer of the Camp Fire Girls of America, a Director of the Inkowa Club and an enthusiastic boatsman and yachtsman, holding a master's license. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, an elder in the West End Presbyterian Church of New York City, Regent of the Colonial Descendents of America, a member of the Schoolmasters Club, and of the Schoolmasters Association of New York and Vicinity, a Freemason of 38 years standing and a member of the New York Rotary Club. As a lecturer, besides history, education and travel, Dr. Scudder specializes on Luther Burbank, whom he knew personally, and on the Passion Play at Oberammergau. His lecture, profusely illustrated, he has given since 1910 upward of 300 times before colleges, universities, schools, churches, clubs, masonic lodges, in the Museum of Natural History and even on a U. S. battleship.

His has been a busy life, dominated by the spirit of the thought, "He Profits Most Who Serves Best."

National Board Conference and Luncheon

A TWELVE months of motion picture history will soon have passed over the reels since the 1929 Annual Conference and Luncheon of the National Board of Review and plans are rapidly developing for the 1930 Conference. The dates of the Conference are January 23rd-25th and the place is the Roosevelt Hotel, New York City.

This is to be essentially a study conference with addresses and discussions planned to help in the better understanding and the constructive carrying forward of the organized better films committee work.

There will be in addition to the lectures and round table sessions, the preview of pictures in the various film company projection rooms and an instructive and interesting demonstration of a sound picture. The culminating event will be the fifteenth annual luncheon on Saturday noon, January the twenty-fifth, presenting prominent speakers and screen celebrities.

Last year guests gathered from far and wide and it is anticipated that this year an even greater number of friends of the National Board will be present.

Reservations are now in order and we extend to all our readers a cordial invitation to take part in this meeting for the social study of the motion picture.

The Conference fee, including all sessions except the Luncheon is $1.00, Luncheon tickets, $3.50.

Filming Children for Children

The Delightful Pursuit of Madeline Brandeis

By Ruth M. Tildesley

In spite of the amazing development of the motion picture in many fields during recent years there is still one lamentable lack. That lack is the production of films intended primarily for children. When an effort is made directly to correct this shortcoming it is worthy of the attention of all those engaged in the better films movement. We are happy therefore to have the opportunity to reprint from The Woman's Journal this story of Mrs. Brandeis' activities.—Editor's Note.

PROMOTING friendliness among small citizens of all nations is perhaps the biggest thing about the work of Madeline Brandeis, producer and director of moving pictures for children.

The League of Nations has recently recognized Mrs. Brandeis as an important contributor to world peace, and her films are to be exhibited at a special session of this august body. Her book, "Children of All Lands," in conjunction with her short films, is already in use in our schools as a means of bringing the lives of little people everywhere before the eyes and minds of young students.

But Mrs. Brandeis didn't rise to success in a night.

It is ten years since she made her initial essay into the realm of motion pictures, and then it was merely a whim.

"Give me a check instead of a bracelet," she urged her husband, who had suggested an anniversary gift. "I'd like to make a picture!"

A Californian, whose marriage had taken her to Chicago, where she was desperately homesick, she welcomed the idea of work.

"I knew nothing about pictures," she confesses, "but I had written a fairy story,

"A Little Indian Weaver", a film showing child life among the Navajo Indians

'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,' and thought I'd enjoy making it come to life on the screen —a souvenir for my grandchildren—if I ever had any. I hired the Emerald Studios, a moth-eaten old place, advertised for children and sent for Hollywood's infant star, Zoe

Ray, to play the lead."

"Since I knew nothing at all, I had no problems. I loved every minute of it and was sorry when it was over. Not having intended to make a commercial picture, I was amazed when a company making a fairy-tale series bought the finished product."

A few years passed. Mrs. Brandeis now in Hollywood met director Renaud Hoffman at a social affair. Conversation turned on children's films, and Mr. Hoffman spoke of his dream of making two-reel pictures of famous poems, such as "Not One to Spare."

Mrs. Brandeis' imagination caught fire. "Let's make it together!" she cried, and risked her slender capital in a second production venture.

"This picture cost around $6,000," says Mrs. Brandeis, "and at the present time has grossed very near $100,000. The nice part of my productions has been the fact that they have all been subjects that last for a long time, never timely 'up to the minute' stories that have a passing vogue. Therefore pictures such as *'Not One to Spare'* are still, after many years, holding their own in the theatrical as well as non-theatrical field."

The success of this and *The Shining Adventure*, a two-reeler that grew to five reels before Hugo Ballin (who directed it for her) finished it, incited Mrs. Brandeis to further efforts.

"Children are the most interesting things in the world." Mrs. Brandeis glanced out of the study window of her hillside home at her eight-year-old daughter Marie playing so happily in their garden.

It was Marie, with her vivid interest in

Kneeling at a Mountain Shrine in the film "The Little Swiss Woodcarver"

what she *saw* in contrast to her indifference to what she *heard*, who sent her mother's mind traveling the lane that led to her happiest success.

"I noticed how much more swiftly Marie learned from pictures, and the idea came to me to make a series of films depicting the lives of children everywhere."

This project grew and grew. With Mrs. Elizabeth Dessez, then of the educational department of Pathe, she worked out a series of stories concerning small citizens of other lands. Pathe financed the production of the series, of which four have been completed: *The Little Indian Weaver,* a story of Navajo Indian life; *Wee Scotch Piper,* made on the bonny banks of Loch Lomond; *Little Swiss Wood Carver,* filmed in the shadow of the Alps, and *Little Dutch Tulip Girl,* made in Volendam, Holland, the only spot left in the dike country where quaint native costumes are still worn.

Mrs. Brandeis engaged a camera man in each different country and while she cast and directed her small classics, struggled with interpreters against native prejudices concerning motion pictures. Sometimes she developed the film and always she cut and titled her finished product. Her contract with Pathe called for a picture a month and a travelogue of all the countries she passed through. In addition to this, she had agreed to write a series of books on "Children of All Lands." Somehow she managed to keep both contracts, besides running her car and amusing her child.

Her pictures are used in school as part of the geography lesson. The teacher first announces what country is to be visited by her class. One of the pupils finds it on the map and others recite what they have learned from their books about the land. Following this, the picture is shown and the children talk it over.

"The youngsters are invariably surprised to discover that everyone in Scotland doesn't wear kilts and that the wooden shoes of Holland are no more," commented Mrs. Brandeis. "I was much impressed by the intelligent questions asked by the school children and cannot help feeling that my little pictures are filling a very real need."

So, in her modest way, this young woman is furthering the hope of world brotherhood by bringing little citizens all over the world into closer contact.

BOOK-FILM tie-up possibilities seem to be steadily increasing with the new type of story material made adaptable by the sound pictures. The latest cooperation in a very comprehensive manner is that of Warner Brothers and D. Appleton & Company, book publishers, on the picture *Disraeli.* Warner Brothers have recently released their screen version of the play starring George Arliss and most timely with the film release was the publication by Appleton of the two volume edition of "Disraeli's Letters to Lady Chesterfield and Lady Bradford." This is a voluminous correspondence of nearly 1,600 letters, written by Disraeli after the death of his wife and while he was Prime Minister to

Queen Victoria. The excellent biography of Disraeli by Andre Maurois which proved the best selling non-fiction book of 1928 was also published by Appleton. This older book of great interest and this newer one coincident with the release of the *Disraeli* film offered an effective means of promoting both the books and the film.

At the opening of the picture on Broadway interesting displays of Disraeli books were installed in New York stores and in the lobby of the theatre was arranged a remarkable exhibit which included a valuable original letter from Disraeli to Appleton and Company, who were the publishers of Disraeli's own novels in the 1870's. There was also in the exhibit a first American edition of "Lothair," one of Disraeli's novels which Appleton brought out in this country. Another thing that was done to connect the books and the film was the printing of a poster featuring the books and having the caption: "Have you seen George Arliss in the movies?"

Exceptional Photoplays

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M. R. Werner

A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers who are looking beyond what the popular theatres have to offer.

SECRETARY

Alfred B. Kuttner

EDITORS

Alfred B. Kuttner
Wilton A. Barrett

The New Babylon

Directed by ..... {*G. M. Kozintsov* / *L. G. Trauberg*

Photographed by ..... *A. N. Moskvin*

The Cast

The Soldier ..... *P. Sobolerski*
The Girl ..... *Elena Kuzmina*

IN this picture the Russians have gone outside their own land for their subject, but their ideology—their social philosophy and social passions—remains, of course, the same. They have undertaken to represent the efforts of communism to establish itself in France at the close of the Franco-Prussian War, when the Paris Commune fought its vain fight against the rest of France, under the eyes of the German conquerors.

We have become accustomed, in these Russian films, to the fact that they are all made with a definite educative purpose. That sort of thing is called propaganda, which is a word with sinister and aggressive connotations. The propaganda of Russian films can be summed up and disposed of in one statement—Russian films are made for Russians, to spread among them, with all the power of which the motion picture medium is master, the social and political principles which the Soviet leaders know must become part of the mentality of every citizen before they can become a completely living force in the national life. Therefore every motion picture they make is a picture with a purpose, a frankly ulterior purpose—not to paint the whole world red, but to help the people of Russia to understand the form of government under which they are living. Which may be dangerous and wicked, or not, as you happen to feel. The only point about it that interests us for the time being is that it determines the subject matter and the "message" of all Russian films.

Fortunately for the motion picture as a form of art, there is no restriction put upon the Russian director about how he shall make his picture, once the subject and its ideological treatment has been decided. And he has no box-office bugaboo to set a low standard of intelligence for him to appeal to. His hand as an artist is free.

It is this freedom that has given the Russian directors the means to go the extraordinary distance they have covered in motion picture technique. Perhaps the removal of other considerations—subject, story and such—has increased this freedom. It certainly has not hampered them any more than it hampered Michael Angelo and Raphael to be assigned definite subjects to paint.

The New Babylon belongs without any doubt in the group of remarkable pictures which we first became aware of in *Czar Ivan the Terrible* and which includes the Eisenstein pictures—*Potemkin* and *Ten Days that Shook the World*—the Pudovkin *End of St. Petersberg* and Dovzhenko's *Arsenal*. There is a habit in Russia of lining up their directors according to their leftness or rightness—the directors of *The New Babylon* would come somewhere not far from Pudovkin: much more radical in their artistic procedure than the man who made *Ivan*, but not nearly so far to the left as Eisenstein and Dovzhenko.

They have frankly avoided much in the way of plot by calling their picture "episodes from the Franko-Prussian War and the Paris Commune". But these episodes are sufficiently held together by two characters who

are rather more individualized than most of the left-wing directors go in for: a soldier, weary of war and anxious to get back to his home village, and a girl who works in La Nouvelle Babylone — the huge department store that symbolizes the Paris of its time and gives the film its title. These two people have almost a story, an unfulfilled love-story. They meet for a few minutes in the wild whirl of gaiety that came with the beginning of the war when all Paris was confident of victory and the army was supposed to be sweeping victoriously toward Berlin. Again during the siege of the city they come together—he is bitterer against war now, and she is beginning to feel that distrust of the government which later, when it became widespread, flamed into the Commune. Later still they confront each other on the barricades in the midst of the fighting—he still sticking by the national army because he sees no other way of bringing the fighting to an end and getting home—she taking her place beside the men and battling against what she feels to be the tyrannous incompetence that has lost the war for France. The last meeting is at the end—she among the rebels who are lined up to be shot—he, not allowed to go home, set with other soldiers to digging graves for the executed criminals.

These two people are individuals—all the others are types and symbols: types of the aristocracy and rich bourgeoisie, or of the idealized poor. The two individuals are magnificently successful, because the parts are splendidly acted and everything that they do is in character. Most of the others hover close to the mark that borders on caricature, and caricature of a particularly bitter kind. Probably never in a motion picture, even in some of Eisenstein, has there been such a gallery of violent cartoons.

This is hardly a dramatic weakness: it is a fault only in the eyes of those who are looking for fairness and neutrality. There is nothing of either quality in this film. It is a passionately one-sided affair, for the people who made it are convinced, to the bottom of their souls, that they are right, and this profound conviction gives their passion a stamp

A striking scene in "The New Babylon"

From the Russian film "The New Babylon"

of truth that carries it to a point which, if it does not terrify you, carries you off your feet until a quiet after-moment allows you to think the whole thing over with cooler judgment. "Vive la Commune", scrawled upon a wall by a dying rebel at the end, wakens a sympathetic thrill for the moment, and a temporary belief that all that was really noble in France was snuffed out in the last vengeful executions of the nationalist army.

It is no reflection on the artistic power of this picture to say that what it presents is biased and therefore mixed with falsity. It must be admitted, though, that the repeated contrasts between the rich and the poor, the sunshine and the rain, get to have the effect of a mannerism—they lose the hold on the essentials of truth-telling, by which I mean telling the truth to the best of one's ability according to one's vision of it, and become artificial, almost sentimental. It is rarely that Russians become sentimental in this particular way.

There is extraordinary photography, of a kind, in this picture. It is fuzzier than Russian films are wont to be—it often has almost a Hollywood beauty—the honest blacks and whites, clear-cut and uncompromising, are used only for the communists, while the festivities of the wicked bourgeoisie are befogged in a softness that American directors

(*Continued on page* 23)

The Trespasser

Directed by.....*Edmund Goulding*
Starring.....*Gloria Swanson*

THIS picture has a story incontrovertibly trite, but there is something in it that lifts it out of the ordinary run of trite stories. This something is a mixture of clever direction, with which Edmund Goulding has concealed many a weak spot in the drama which he himself constructed, and of unusually good acting, particularly by Robert Ames and Gloria Swanson, who gives a performance which, though it wavers in spots, is on the whole the most carefully built and best sustained thing that this really talented actress has yet done.

Produced and distributed by United Artists.

An Hour with the Movies and the Talkies

By GILBERT SELDES

A volume appearing in The One Hour Series of J. B. Lippincott Company, $1.00.

THIS small but compact volume sets itself two queries to answer: Why has no figure comparable to Chaplin in slapstick comedy appeared in any of the other types of the movies? and Has the movie come to its natural end ("end" in the sense of "goal" or in the sense of "death") with the talking picture?

Mr. Seldes, who has a lively interest in every form of art that is itself alive, is as keen and intelligent an observer of the movies as exists anywhere. His examination of the two queries set in this book take him into a survey of the whole history of movies. The result is interesting, enlightening and entertaining. It may be divulged that his answer to question number two is "No"—how he arrives at it is something everyone critically interested in the screen ought to read.

Do the Moving Pictures Incite to Crime?

"FROM time to time the accusation, unsupported by citation of cases has been made that the motion pictures incite people to anti-social conduct" is the introductory statement in the section devoted to motion pictures in a recent study of crime by Dr. Joseph L. Holmes, of the Department of Psychology, Columbia University. "Such statements," he says, "usually refer to delinquency among children and are for the most part broad generalizations about the lure that the pictures have for children and the great number of children who attend the picture theatres." Wishing to get an accurate estimate as to the number of children who attend the pictures Dr. Holmes undertook a census of the motion picture audiences in New York City by the method of sampling. Some striking figures as to the small percentage of children's attendance were revealed in the results.

In a further attempt to get first hand knowledge as to the influence of the motion picture on children, Dr. Holmes sent questionnaires to officials, judges, public prosecutors and police asking them to give their opinion on the motion picture as a cause of crime and to cite cases in support of their contentions. Agreeing with the conclusion given in the pamphlet, "Motion Pictures Not Guilty," an earlier research on this subject conducted by the National Board of Review, the replies were in the main negative. Dr. Holmes' report gives some of the replies, both negative and affirmative, which are of importance to those particularly interested in the subject.

"The pictures are, of course, a means of disseminating suggestion and do so with greater facility than newspapers, pictures being a more easily comprehended means of communication than the written word. The question is, what kind of suggestions do they furnish?" asks Dr. Holmes. In a discussion of this subject there is one point especially pertinent considering the current accusation of an over-dose of crime pictures. In the crime story, says the author, "there is a continuity from the crime itself to the detection of the offender and his punishment. For the most part the last two elements when they are not quite secondary to the main theme, the trials and tribulations of the victim and his friends are the elements on which attention is centered. Such treatment of a crime story is in decided contrast to that of the newspaper which centers attention on the crime, the criminal and his trial and does not provide the continuity, the immediate sequence of crime and punishment. Another contrasting aspect of the pictures and papers is this. A picture once seen loses its interest. A news story is repeated time and again." A brief statement of the author's point is "pictures lack that potent factor of suggestion, volume."

The pictures lack another potent factor of suggestion, prestige. "What prestige," notes the author, "the criminal is given in the pictures is taken from him at the climax and the climax comes after an hour or two, not months after the crime."

In speaking of censorship Dr. Holmes refers to the work of the National Board which he says is "criticism by unpaid reviewers" as opposed to the self-criticism of the industry organization and the official censorship of the various State Boards of Censors.

Better Films Committees and others inter-

ested in the effects of the motion picture will find this study enlightening. It appears in a pamphlet entitled "Crime and the Press" by Joseph L. Holmes, Columbia University, and is reprinted from the Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, May and August, 1929.

H_2O

RALPH STEINER has been awarded the first prize of $500 in the 1929 Photoplay amateur contest for his non-dramatic film *H_2O*, a study of water in motion and of abstract patterns of shapes in water.

The judges in the contest included King Vidor, motion picture director, James R. Quirk, editor and publisher of Photoplay Magazine, George Pierce Baker of Yale University, and Wilton A. Barrett, executive secretary of the National Board of Review.

The film is described in the announcement of awards as "a study of water in the new manner: A series of photographic shots of the reflections of boats, ferry houses, docks, and so forth, on water and the whole resulting in a chain of pure abstract patterns of shapes in water. Steiner achieves an astonishing tempo as his film advances. The picture is bound to attract wide attention and a great deal of discussion wherever shown."

Mr. Steiner, whose work as an advertising photographer won the 1928 award of first prize in the New York Art Director's Show, is at present staff photographer for the Delineator Home Institute. He has also contributed to Vanity Fair, Theatre Arts and other magazines.

He began making moving pictures two years ago, first producing a film which he describes as "the world's worst moving picture," in which he attempted to portray the best and the worst features of American city life. The trouble with the picture was, he explains, that it did not move. It developed into a series of still shots.

Then he determined to get motion into his work and produced the film showing water in motion, which was awarded the Photoplay prize. Since it was made Mr. Steiner has produced two other films, one showing the operations involved in making silage, the filling of a silo on a farm; the other a ballet type of film entitled *People Playing Croquet*.

ROLLS of photographic film alone can rescue the Berlin State Library from "drowning in books," is the opinion of some library specialists who have advanced a plan for the installation of a "celluloid library," or film section where photographed books can be filed instead of the originals. Books photographed page by page on a continuous roll of film can be stored, it has been found, in less than a fortieth of the space needed for the usual printed volumes. Hence a library of tiny film rolls could have forty times the capacity of the present institution without any extension of the buildings. Old and precious examples of the bookmaker's art, moreover, when photographed, would need no longer to be exposed to the wear and tear of usage. New books, having no special intrinsic value in themselves could be destroyed. According to the plan, books in constant demand would be separated from those seldom referred to, and the new photographic system would be first installed with the latter, a special "film reading room" being arranged for their use. A small projection machine would be installed beneath each table, the "pages" being shown on a small individual screen that the student could read while leaning comfortably back in his armchair. No more backtiring hunching over reading tables or wrist-tiring holding of heavy tomes would be necessary. The book film could be run through the projection machine precisely as a movie is run at a picture theatre. Special tables for encyclopedias, dictionaries and similar reference volumes are foreseen in the plan. On these the rolls for each encyclopedia, a separate roll for each letter of the alphabet would be stacked ready for use. In the storage room of the library the "stacks" or shelves would be replaced by metal cabinets full of film rolls, while the bookbinder's art of today would be partly turned to the manufacture of roll covers, of linen, paper, metal or even tooled leather.—N. Y. *Times*.

THE moving picture will never really find itself until it divorces itself from the drama. Something, of course, the two are bound to have in common, but the pictures presently lean too heavily upon stage drama and too little upon their own possibilities and resources.—George Jean Nathan.

BETTER FILMS FORUM
EDITOR: BETTINA GUNCZY
Department of the Better Films National Council

Children's Instincts True in Screen Choices

By MISS WILLIE IRVINE SHELBY

The following interesting story was sent to us by Mrs. John A. McRae, Juniors' Matinee Chairman of the Better Films Committee of Charlotte, N. C. Mrs. McRae says in the letter accompanying it, "This was a feature story in the Charlotte Observer. Miss Shelby is the Editor of 'The Junior Observer', a special Sunday section published by the Observer for the school children of Charlotte, and she helps me so much." Here is such a fine example of cooperation among those working for the interest and entertainment of young people that we are happy to pass it on to our readers, especially now when there is so much consideration being given to the question of the value of Juniors' Matinees.—EDITOR'S NOTE.

IT is a mooted question with many what is being done to the youth of the country by the motion pictures they are being shown. You're ruining them; raising them to be gangsters—hold-up men, or silly, vain and extravagant women, say some. You're giving them the cheapest form of wit—horse play, burlesque of the worse sort—nothing uplifting or educational or soul-satisfying, say others. You're missing the grandest opportunity imaginable to institute a great moral reform; passing up the best chance the world has ever had to always point a moral while adorning a tale, say still others. And so the critics harp and the reformers wail while this enormous industry of the silver screen goes steadily on with its mammoth productions and hundreds and thousands of children of more or less tender age pour into and out of the motion picture palaces every week day. Well, are we doing it? Are we teaching these dear young things through the medium of their honest eyes and often now through the medium of their keen young ears to love robberies and murders, to long for enervating luxury and vampish underworld stuff? Have we ceased to appreciate all that is genuine and true, like honor and courage and self-sacrifice, and causing them to demand thrills of the worser sort and entertainment that will only demean? To prove that this was not the case —not in Charlotte, anyhow,—the film selection committee had thrown on the screen at a Junior Matinee a request that the children let the committee know what pictures they would like to see. As a result, scores of replies poured in and topping the list of pictures, that is getting the most votes from the children, were the following: *The Three Musketeers, The Big Parade, The Lost World, Lilac Time, Ben Hur, The Birth of a Nation, The Ten Commandments, Harold Teen, Wings* and *The Vanishing American*. Nothing ruinous about such a list as that? Nothing so cheap or enervating or degrading as to make the critic carp and the reformer wail. However, if they are still in doubt, let them read the list of pictures desired by the Boy Scouts in particular—a list made up by a group of those who have been giving their services as ushers at the Juniors' Matinees and who signed their list in a body: *The Three Musketeers, The Phantom of the Opera, When Knighthood Was in Flower, The Black Pirate* and *Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall.*

Furthermore, the children are not backward in expressing themselves vocally as to the pictures they like. One bright-eyed young chap on the morning when the screen request for opinions was presented replied to a chaperon at the door as he left the theatre, who asked him to be sure and make out a list of the pictures he would like to see, "Sure, I will; and don't you be giving us any more of these old love pictures, either. We don't like 'em." And an equally bright young girl

of tender teen age remarked to the writer: "I hate love pictures, don't you? They are so silly."

Yea, verily, the children know their movies and tell you about it. When the selection committee checked over the lists that were sent in in reply to their request it was found that as many as 133 different pictures were mentioned. It is a question as to whether the children of former days—days devoid of motion pictures—were as versed in the literature of their times which of necessity must have taken the place of the silver screen in the way of entertainment. It is a more important question as to whether they discussed what they read in those days with their elders as they do not hesitate to discuss the motion pictures they see today. For we may well imagine the girl of the gay nineties occasionally venturing from the safe path of the Dinsmore books into the flowery fields of faster fiction—on the sly. And doubtless there was many a boy of that period who occasionally passed up his "Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates" for a ripping yarn about Diamond Dick—behind the barn. No delightful discussion of these, if you please, at the supper table. No interested and interesting clashing of the young with the mature about the family board. Plenty of opinions, probably, but on the sly.

Yet the critics carp and the reformers wail while the motion picture manufacturers go steadily on with their products and such organizations as film selection committees and the like gladly do what they can to discover what pictures are being wanted by the youth of today who, even now, make up the audience to some extent. And meanwhile box office receipts are checked up carefully with this and that production and noted accordingly. For what industry is there that can reckon without its patrons? And what manufacturer is there who will fly in the face of public opinion? And what opinion have we more explicit than that of the children? That that opinion is to be trusted to work out its own salvation along motion picture lines and to demand and eventually receive only such pictures as will amuse without demeaning and inform without too evident uplift, the film selection committee feels that it has proven.

MRS. HUGH A. SMITH, a very active D. A. R. Better Films Chapter Chairman, sends us a report of her latest activity, one which undoubtedly will have two important results, that of proving to the cooperating theatre exhibitor who arranged the presentation that those who talk of better films also lend their support to these better films when they are exhibited and that of arousing added interest in the community for the work which Mrs. Smith and her associates are doing, not only in the D. A. R. Society but through various groups. This fine work has received further impetus through a recent visit to the chapter of Mrs. William H. Pouch, vice-chairman of the national Better Films Committee of the D. A. R. Mrs. Smith's report follows:

"The Better Films Committee of the Irondequoit Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, of Rochester, New York, held a theatre party in the Eastman Theatre of that city on the evening of Armistice Day, November 11th. The attraction was Paramount's all-talking adaptation of *The Virginian,* Owen Wister's popular novel of an earlier day. The theatre cooperated by reserving the mezzanine floor and printing special tickets for the party, which was attended by about two hundred and fifty people. Members of the committee acted as hostesses. This was in no measure a money-making project, the chapter simply wishing to register its approval of so fine a picture as *The Virginian.* We especially enjoyed the primitive locomotive of the train which brought Mary Brian, the New England "school marm," to Wyoming, the old "gig," which conveyed "Uncle Hughie" and his family to the party, and the old-fashioned furnishings in the houses."

"On November 19th Mrs. William H. Pouch, of New York City, State Chairman of Better Films and National Vice-chairman for the Northern Division, N. S. D. A. R., visited Rochester to participate in a Sixth District Conference. Chairmen from seven of the towns in the district met with her and discussed what could be done in the direction of theatre parties for the support of exceptional films, also plans to take movies to "shut-ins" and to the inmates of institutions. In the evening Mrs. Pouch had dinner with the local Better Films Committee at "Ye Olde

House" on Spring Street, which is the oldest house standing in Rochester and the original home of the Irondequoit Chapter, D. A. R.

PERHAPS one reason for the continued success of the Juniors' Matinees of the Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee is due to the fact that no avenue is overlooked for bringing these programs to the attention of the public. "An innovation introduced this season," quoting from the annual report of Mrs. Chestney, the president, "is the radio announcements which are made weekly of the matinee programs and of the recommendations of the committee in regard to the very good, excellent and exceptional pictures which are shown locally. Of course this necessitates the writing of a concise statement of the plans for each Saturday. This I do weekly, sending them to Mr. Salmon, resident manager of the Publix theatres, who, generously allows the announcements to be made during the time allotted to the theatres for their announcements, for which the committee is greatly indebted to him." A copy of one radio announcement which Mrs. Chestney has sent us is as follows:

"Humane Week is to be observed by the Macon Better Films Committee at the matinee tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock at the Rialto Theatre with a program of unusual interest.

The feature picture is to be *Under the Black Eagle*—a story of the World War featuring a man and his dog, who both serve valiantly in the war, where they are injured but recover.

The always delightful members of the gang —Farina and the rest—are to appear in one of their comedies called *Love My Dog*, in which the Gang puts on a dog show with their many varieties of dogs.

The attendance prizes are to be a real live puppy, named Monty, for Montague Salmon, resident manager of the Publix theatres and the most interested person, outside of the committee, in the children's matinee, and two live kittens, named for their donors—Helen and George, Jr., Massenburg.

The souvenirs for the morning are to be Barnum Animals, donated by the National Biscuit Company, through an arrangement made by Mr. Robert Simpson, house manager of the Rialto.

During community singing several comedy animal songs will be sung led by Mr. Salmon.

The prologue is to be a dance by a child in a Black Cat costume and the ushers will be similarly attired."

Mrs. Piercy Chestney has entered her seventh year of work as president of the Macon Committee. Her able assistants for the coming year are Mrs. Walter Grace, vice-president; Mrs. Robert Nussbaum, recording secretary; Miss Mary Davis, corresponding secretary, and Mrs. A. F. McGhee, treasurer.

MRS. HARRY GROVER has been elected president of the Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee for the sixth consecutive year. Mrs. Grover in addition to the duties attached to her own committee has found time to assist in the organizing of other committees in New Jersey and to speak of community better films work at meetings of various organizations. Recently she delivered an address on this topic in the course of study on Resources in Social Welfare conducted by the Greater New York Federation of Churches.

The Rutherford organization has 56 members, 45 of whom are representatives of civic, educational and church groups. The committee was organized to obtain better motion pictures in Rutherford and has concerned itself with many phases of the motion picture work. Its aim is double: to study the motion picture in its growth and development, recognizing it as a separate medium of creative effort, and to educate the community and the public to appreciate the best in motion pictures so as to aid in obtaining a continuous production of better films. Other officers of the committee are: Mrs. Harry B. Pettingill, vice-president; Mrs. Charles Liebensberger, recording secretary; Mrs. Michael Halpin, corresponding secretary, and Miss Martha Clark, treasurer. The organized sub-committees include the committee on the weekly photoplay guide published in newspapers, theatre review, studio review, "Do You Know" column, visual instruction, juniors' matinees, library, extension and membership, hospitality, programs, publicity and exceptional photoplays.

THE newly appointed Better Films Chairman of the New Netherlands Chapter, D. A. R., of New York City, Miss Edith Ford, is undertaking her duties with the greatest interest. She is serving as a member of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review and she sends out regularly bulletins on selected pictures to the chapter members so that they can offer their share in the support of the better pictures. Answering our request to her to keep us informed of activities she has sent us the following enthusiastic report of the meeting of the first district chairmen:

"Mrs. William H. Pouch, National Vice-chairman and New York State Chairman of Better Films of the D. A. R. Society held a meeting of chapter better films chairmen of the first district at her home in New York City on November 14th to give us her message for the coming year's work and an opportunity to get acquainted and compare notes on our activities. Three points were emphasized as most important—children's matinees, the grading of pictures in reviewing, whether for children, youths, family or mature audiences, and the request that family pictures be shown on Friday nights when so many school children are premitted to attend the pictures. We received many valuable hints and suggestions and after delightful refreshments adjourned filled with new ideas and enthusiasm."

A REPORT by British Instructional Films on the experimental series of exhibitions of pictures for children held in London last winter has about it a ring of Olympian certainty that the exhibitor to an adult public must envy. Children, it is declared, are amused not so much by slapstick comedy as, for example, by the vigorous efforts of a caterpillar to discard the overcoat it has outgrown. There is no need to tickle the child's palate with obviously funny pictures. The child sees its own humorous aspects in each film. "A bear at the Zoo taking its little dose of condensed milk; a whelk retreating rapidly over the sea floor at the approach of the diver, achieving speed but not dignity; an Eskimo child in the far off North showing bashfulness at having her photograph taken"—these subjects are the subjects, it seems, which arouse the laughter of children.

"IT is not how many good pictures you see that makes the movies boresome—it is how many bad ones!" This is Mrs. Myrtle Snell's opinion who has been serving Birmingham (Ala.) as its amusement inspector for eight years and who is intensely interested in the better films movement. Mrs. Snell succeeded Birmingham's first inspector, Mrs. Neil Wallace, the organizer of the Birmingham Better Films Committee in 1921. "The influence of the motion picture," says Mrs. Snell, "rivals that of all the stages, pulpits, lecture platforms, newspapers and books in the world today. Formerly an actor spoke to a few hundred, but now his picture travels and is seen, perhaps, by millions of people. A picture can be absorbed as water enters a sponge. It may carry a message of hope and cheer into the lives of masses of people who have no other dramatic entertainment, giving them their only contact with the cultured world."

The children of Birmingham who attend the regular Saturday Junior Matinees have quite a treat in store for them during the coming season as shown in the program published recently. Among the films booked for these special performances are an episode each week of *Tarzan*, *The Carnation Kid* with Douglas McLean, *Red Hot Speed* with Reginald Denny, Richard Dix in *Sporting Goods*, a school play *Prep and Pep*, *Air Circus*, *Annapolis*, *Son of the Golden West* featuring Tom Mix, *Across the Atlantic* with Monte Blue, Harold Lloyd in *The Freshman*, *The Land of the Silver Fox* with Rin-Tin-Tin, *My Best Girl* starring Mary Pickford, *Alaskan Adventures* and *The River of Romance*. Attractive prologues have also been planned and it looks like a gala year for Birmingham.

THE kindergarten and primary teachers of Grand Rapids (Mich.) have supervised the taking of 1,200 feet of films showing all types of kindergartens, first and second grade activities. The Grand Rapids Kindergarten-Primary Club offers this film for rental at cost to any group interested in educational activities of young children. Further information may be obtained, according to the Michigan Educational Journal, from Harriet K. Ayer, Oakdale School, Grand Rapids.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

ALFRED B. KUTTNER
FRANCES C. BARRETT

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

NOTE—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

Acquitted

Directed by.....*Frank R. Strayer*

Featuring.....*Margaret Livingston*, *Lloyd Hughes*, *Sam Hardy*

Screen story by Keene Thompson

THE leader of an underworld gang is in love with a girl who has joined his forces but he finds that she loves a young doctor, framed for murder by his gang, whom she met while serving a term in prison. After her release she appeals to the leader and he arranges the acquittal of the doctor. She manages in time to save both herslf and the man she loves from still threatening danger. Sam Hardy does a fine piece of work as the gang leader and his acting, together with the well sustained suspense of the plot makes the film an interesting one.

For family audience including young people.
(Columbia—7 reels)

The Battle of Paris

Directed by.....*Robert Florey*
Featuring.....*Gertrude Lawrence*
Screen story by Gene Markey

THE inimitable Gertrude Lawrence of stage fame appears in a story of the World War. As Georgie, a street singer, she is befriended by a young artist, Tony Trent. Tony goes to war but on his leave in Paris he becomes infatuated with Suzanne, and Georgie waits for him in vain. Later she finds him at a cafe with Suzanne and enlisting the aid of her "three musketeers", whom she had nursed as war invalids, she plans to get Tony away from Suzanne. After a number of adventures she succeeds and with the signing of the armistice "the battle of Paris" also ends in happiness. The musical selections are very entertaining.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

The Forward Pass

Directed by.....*Edward Cline*
Featuring.....*Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.*, *Loretta Young*

Screen story by Harvey Gates

A PLEASING picture with a good football game. The big game of the year is being played and on the team are two boys in love with the same girl. The less favored one tries to throw the game and place the blame on his rival. College spirit, however, is stronger than personal animosity and so they agree to forget their dislike for each other and win the game for their school.

For family audience including children.
(First National—8 reels)

Glorifying the American Girl

Directed by ..... *Millard Webb*
Featuring ..... *Mary Eaton*
Screen story by J. P. McEvoy

A MUSICAL show featuring a Ziegfeld star. Gloria Hughes who sings in the sheet music section of a department store and Buddy, her accompanist are in love. She has a chance to go into vaudeville and starts on tour with her mother. Later returning to New York she achieves her greatest ambition, that of becoming a feature in a Ziegfeld show. The music is good and the picture colorful.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—10 feels)

The Great Gabbo

Directed by ..... *James Cruze*
Featuring ..... *Eric von Stroheim*
Story by Ben Hecht

THIS is a story of a dual personality worked out against the background of the theatre. Von Stroheim plays the part of an egotistical ventriloquist artist self-designated "The Great Gabbo." His dummy known as "Otto" serves not only as a part of the act but as the mouth piece through which the hard and overbearing Gabbo expresses his gentler self. The young girl assistant in the act is the target for all his petty tyrannies and it is only to the dummy that he talks of his love for her. No longer able to endure his treatment she leaves but several years later they meet again, both having reached stardom in the meantime. Once more Gabbo speaks of love through the dummy Otto but the story ends upon the tragic note of another parting. Von Stroheim's work is excellent in both acting and dialogue.

For family audience including young people.

(Sono Art—World Wide—11 reels)

Half Way to Heaven

Directed by ..... *George Abbott*
Featuring ..... *Charles Rogers*
Screen story by Henry L. Gates

THE romance of a troupe of acrobats. Nick, the swing man in a flying trapeze act, is in love with a girl in the troupe. Jealous of the other man in the act he fails to catch him in his blind-fold stunt and he is killed. The girl, afraid of Nick runs away and stays in a small town. There she falls in love with a boy and when she discovers that he is the new trapeze artist in the act she returns to protect him. Realizing that the girl loves the new trouper once again Nick plans to let the partner fall but the boy outwits him, and he and the girl plan their future together.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—8 reels)

It's a Great Life

Directed by ..... *Sam Wood*
Featuring ..... *The Duncan Sisters*
Screen story by Byron Morgan and Alfred Block

TWO sisters and a boy who are employed by a department store to sing and play in their sheet music section, are fired and they go into vaudeville. The boy loves one of the sisters and when they are married the other sister, jealous, breaks up the team. Separated they are failures but finally they are reconciled and all is well. Entertaining and amusing.

For family audience including children.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

Little Johnny Jones

Directed by ..... *Mervyn Le Roy*
Featuring ..... *Eddie Buzzell*
Play by George M. Cohan

JOHNNY JONES, a jockey, goes to New York with the biggest stable owner in the country. Broadway and the attentions of Vivian Dale, a theatrical star, turn his head, and when his fiancee, Mary comes to New York with her father Johnny tells her he loves Vivian. He is to ride "Yankee" but refuses to throw the race for Vivian who has bet a fortune on the other horse but when Johnny does not win, a telegram is discovered from Vivian which throws suspicion on him and he is barred from the American tracks for a year. He goes to England determined to make good and at Epsom Downes meets Mary's father and persuades him to let him ride "Yankee" again in the race. He rides him to victory, Mary forgives him and they sail for

home.

For family audience including children.

(First National—8 reels)

* The Love Parade

Directed by .....*Ernest Lubitsch*
Featuring .....*Maurice Chevalier*
Play "The Prince Consort" by Ernest Vajda and Guy Bolton

SENT back from Paris for his wild escapades, a young soldier returns home to serve his Queen. He falls in love with her and they are married, but being only the Prince Consort he finds life humiliating to his manhood. After a bitter scene the Queen declares he can rule both the affairs of state and home. There is some very fine acting and the picture is amusing and well directed.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—12 reels)

The Mighty

Directed by .....*John Cromwell*
Featuring .....*George Bancroft*
Screen story by Robert N. Lee

A STORY of a man's reform. During the World War the leader of an underworld gang is drafted and sent overseas. Fearless of death he becomes a hero and after the war returns to America an officer. He visits the family of his dead "buddy" in a small Western town. Here he is greeted by the mayor and the townspeople as a great hero and to show their appreciation of his bravery they make him captain of the vice squad to clean up the town. Having gained the love of his "buddy's" sister the man determines to quit the old game and go straight.

For family audience including young people.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Nix on Dames

Directed by .....*Donald Gallaher*
Featuring .....*Mae Clarke*
Screen story by Maude Fulton

TWO acrobats who are woman haters, return to a theatrical boarding house in New York while one who has been injured recuperates. Here they both fall in love with a girl who wants to become an acrobat. The picture is well directed and the scenes in the boarding house are most amusing.

For family audience including children.

(Fox—7 reels)

Painted Faces

Directed by .....*Albert Rogell*
Featuring .....*Joe E. Brown*
Screen story by Frances Hyland

AN interesting story of circus life with a big surprise at the end of the picture. A boy is tried for murder on circumstantial evidence. Eleven of the jury are for conviction but the twelfth holds out for acquittal. Finally the twelfth juror tells his story and the others are so moved by what they hear that they not only agree to acquit the boy but agree to keep everything told there a secret.

For family audience including young people.

(Tiffany—8 reels)

* Paris

Directed by.....*Clarence Badger*
Featuring.....*Irene Bordoni*
Play by Martin Brown

A DELIGHTFUL comedy of a beautiful Parisienne actress, Vivienne Rolland, who falls in love with Andrew Sabbot, a provincial young man from America studying in Paris, but she will not marry him unless his mother consents. The mother arrives in Paris and Vivienne tries to make a good impression. Mrs. Sabbot, who has been seasick, is given some brandy by the actress' leading man which has a startling effect. She immediately forgets her puritanism, dresses in the latest fashion, bobs her hair and flirts with the leading man. Later when Vivienne breaks her engagement with Andrew, who is really in love with a girl from his home town, Mrs. Sabbot reveals that her part has all been a plot. The music and acting are both good.

For family audience including young people.

(First National—10 reels)

A Romance of the Rio Grande

Directed by .....*Alfred Santell*
Featuring .....*Warner Baxter*
Novel "Conquistador" by Catherine Gerauld

A YOUTH, hating his grandfather for disowning his beautiful Mexican daughter when she married an American, is injured

while working on a railroad in Mexico and is taken to his grandfather's house. Too ill to leave the young man is forced to stay. Touched by the old man's regret and remorse for his treatment of his daughter, the grandson is persuaded to remain with the old man whose last days are made happy.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox— reels)

The Sacred Flame

Directed by .....*Archie L. Mayo*
Featuring .....*Pauline Frederick*
Play by W. Somerset Maugham

PAULINE FREDERICK plays the role of the mother who is confronted with the tragedy of her children's lives. Her son on his wedding day is permanently crippled in an accident and his young wife devotes her life to making him as happy as it is possible for him to be. When her other son a few years later joins the household, he and his brother's wife fall in love. The mother discovers that they plan to run away together but does not know that they later decide against such a course. She neither blames the girl for seeking a normal happy life nor will she interfere with her plans, yet she cannot let her crippled son ever awaken to the realization that his wife, his only interest in life, has gone. An absorbing story, well produced and acted with fine restraint.

For the mature audience.
(Warner—7 reels)

Sally

Directed by .....*John Francis Dillon*
Featuring .....*Marilyn Miller*
Musical comedy by Guy Bolton

ZIEGFELD'S musical comedies are proving fruitful sound motion picture material. This one comes to the screen in technicolor. Sally is a poor little waitress in a cheap restaurant who has learned to dance in her spare time, hoping to some day go on the stage. A wealthy man falls in love with her and offers her a chance to dance at a cafe. His mother, who is arranging a marriage between her son and a wealthy girl, gives a lawn party at which a famous Russian dancer is to appear, but the dancer failing to come, Sally is procured to impersonate her. She makes good and later is booked for the Follies.

For family audience including young people.
(First National—12 reels)

Seven Faces

Directed by.....*Berthold Viertel*
Featuring .....*Paul Muni*
Story by Richard Connell

PAUL MUNI does some very excellent work in his portrayal of Papa Chibou, an old man who takes care of a wax museum in Paris, and of six wax figures which come to life as the story unfolds. The figures are those of Napoleon, Don Juan, Diablero the Great, Schubert, Joe Gans and Willie Smith. The museum is a meeting place for lovers and there Georges, a young attorney, and Helene meet secretly. Helene's father, Judge Berthelot, discovers their love and sends Helene away. The museum changes hands and the wax figures are sold at auction. Papa Chibou not having enough money to buy the figure of Napoleon resorts to other methods to secure it but is arrested and tried. Reading of his arrest Helene returns home and facing her father in court, she and Georges plead so well for Papa Chibou that the court suspends sentence and enough money is raised to permit the old man to buy the statue to which he is so attached. The father's heart is softened so all ends well for the two young lovers also. The story is unusual and well told.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—9 reels)

The Show of Shows

Directed by .....*John Adolphi*
Featuring .....*Special Cast*

A SPECTACULAR technicolor musical review. A galaxy of screen stars and a rainbow of color are the chief attractions of this picture. The outstanding feature is the Duke of Gloucester's soliloquy from Shakespeare's "Henry VI" magnificently rendered by John Barrymore in a lavish stage setting. The dance numbers by scores of well trained dancers are unusually well done, the most unusual being the black and white dance.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—12 reels)

The Song of Love

Directed by ..... *Earl C. Kenton*
Featuring ..... *Belle Baker*, *Ralph Graves*

Screen story by Howard Green

A VAUDEVILLE actor and his wife dissolve partnership when the woman realizes her small son needs the environment of a home. Left on his own the husband takes another dancing partner with whom he becomes infatuated. The boy's sorrow at his parents' estrangement is more than he can bear so he stages a meeting and they are all happily re-united.

For family audience including young people.
(Columbia—9 reels)

This Thing Called Love

Directed by ..... *Paul L. Stein*
Featuring ..... *Edmund Lowe*, *Constance Bennett*

Play by Edwin Burke

DISCOURAGED by the failure of so many of their friends to make marriage a success, a young couple decide to be different from the others and try a new plan. The new plan runs smoothly for a while until the little green monster appears. A pleasing picture and one that might teach married people a good lesson.

For the mature audience.
(Pathe—7 reels)

Untamed

Directed by ..... *Jack Conway*
Featuring ..... *Joan Crawford*, *Robert Montgomery*

Story by C. E. Scroggins

THE title suggests primitive lands but the locale of this tale is New York where Joan Crawford, as a young heiress, wins her way into everyone's heart. In the beginning we do find her in the South Seas where she has been brought up by her father. Upon his death, his friend, played most amusingly by Ernest Torrence with his delightful Scotch burr, takes her and the millions left by her father, back to New York. What a very comical time he has on the trip trying to civilize his young ward! Here she falls in love with an American boy, tells him he is her man and decides to marry him. Her guardian has his doubts about this and advises her to wait. After a year in New York she has become a lovely, cultured young lady but her man will not marry her—he has no money and he will not live on her fortune. She finally takes things in her own hands and all ends well. There are many amusing incidents throughout the film and the presence of Joan Crawford makes it doubly entertaining.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Wall Street

Directed by ..... *R. William Neill*
Featuring ..... *Aileen Pringle*, *Ralph Ince*

Screen story by Paul Gangelin and Jack Kirkland

A LOVELY woman of culture, whose husband, ruined in the stock market, commits suicide, finds the attentions of the crude, unpolished master of Wall Street thrust upon her. She is advised to encourage him and learn his financial secrets so that she can crush him as he had crushed her husband. This is accomplished with ease for he has succumbed entirely to her quiet charm. Her annoyance is great, however, at the companionship which springs up between her little son and her suitor. It is only after his complete ruin in Wall Street that she awakens to his fine qualities and realizes her love for him. Ralph Ince gives an excellent performance as the financial king and Aileen Pringle is well suited to the part she plays.

For the mature audience.
(Columbia—7 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

The New Babylon

(See page 8)

For family audience including young people.
(Amkino—8 reels)

The Trespasser

(See page 10)

For family audience including young people.
(United Artists—10 reels)

NON-FEATURES

Albert Spaulding
(Nos. 799, 801 and 802)

Albert Spaulding the well-known violinist plays several selections including his own composition "Alabama" and Chopin's "Valse in G Flat."

For family audience including young people.
(Vitaphone—1 reel each)

Body Building
(Sportlight Series)

Showing how they build up the body in the army and in the navy.

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Carlena Diamond
(No. 864)

Carlena Diamond performs very ably on the harp.

For family audience including young people.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Feminine Fitness
(Sportlight Series)

Basketball, golf, rowing and baseball at Wellsley College keep the girls fit.

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Gotham Rhythm Boys
(No. 832)

A musical number.

For family audience including young people.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Horace Heidt and His Californians
(Nos. 902 and 908)

Playing and dancing by Horace Heidt's orchestra.

For family audience including young people.
(Vitaphone—1 reel each)

Madame Kurenko

Madame Kurenko sings a group of songs.

For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Marching Home
(No. 861)

Douglas Stanbury sings this song well and a chorus of silhouetted soldiers join in.

For family audience including young people.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Norman Thomas Quintet
(No. 827)

Harlem mania.

For family audience including young people.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Old Bill's Christmas

Christmas in the trenches. The English and German troops fraternize on Christmas eve.

For family audience including young people.
(R K O—2 reels)

One Man Reunion

Robert Bruce scenic with a story. An old man returns home expecting a big reunion with his friends only to find the mining town deserted.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Reviews Nos. 29, 31 — 32

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Pathe Audio Review No. 30

For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Reviews Nos. 41-45

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet

Song number.

For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Stamina
(Sportlight Series)

Depicting how stamina is built up with

the aid of sports.
For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Studio Stunts
(Lyman Howe's Hodge Podge Series)

Miscellany of cartoons and scenics.
For family audience including children.
(Educational—1 reel)

Tita Ruffo

Tita Ruffo singing a selection of songs.
For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Those Were the Days
(No. 865)

Irene Franklin demonstrates how girls dressed for the beach in 1893.
For family audience including children.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Trumpeter

Song sketch in which John Stanley sings a war song and shots of the World War are flashed on the screen.
For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Dangerous Females

Marie Dressler and Polly Moran in a comedy which concerns the capture of an escaped convict.
For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—2 reels)

The Interview
(No. 838)

Hugh O'Connell gives an amusing performance of a newspaper reporter who never gets the assignment in on time or correct.
For family audience including young people.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

I've Got Rings On My Fingers

Novelty song number cartoon.
For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Just Like a Man
(No. 839)

A man and his wife change places for a day and he discovers that taking care of a house is decidedly not an easy job.
For family audience including children.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

The New Halfback

Football comedy of a player who has more brawn than brains.
For family audience including children.
(Educational—2 reels)

The Two College Nuts
(No. 845)

Edison and Gregory play tunes on a tire, pump, balloon, a saw and so forth. Very amusing.
For family audience including children.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

The Virginia Judge

Very amusing monologue in which Walter Kelly impersonates a judge and his several prisoners.
For family audience including young people.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

(*Continued from page* 10)

often use as the acme of loveliness. Whatever its effect on different spectators, it is all done with intention, and reveals only another aspect of the Russians' many-sided mastery of the camera.

Produced by Sovkino; Distributed by Amkino.

A PARLOR entertainer, whom First National Pictures are keeping anonymous, is on the way to becoming famous in sound pictures. He can imitate the breaking of ice in a river, the beat of a bird's wings against a window, the rattlesnake's rattle, the bumblebee's bumble, all barnyard noises and the natural cry of the cuckoo.

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of the

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To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

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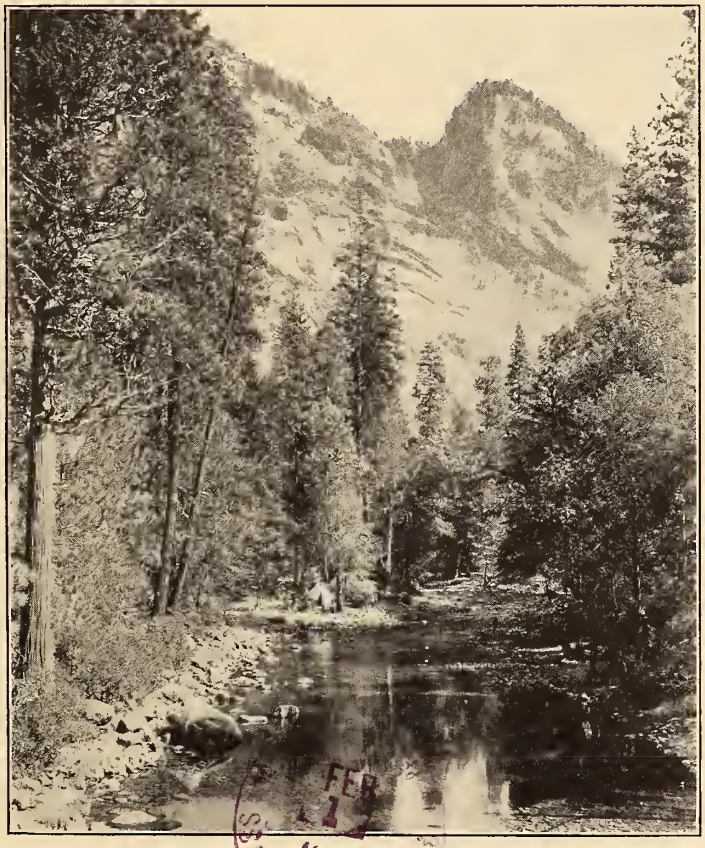
NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. V, No. 1 January, 1930



Mountain Melodies, Bruce Scenic (*see page* 19)

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve witnout pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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From Pole to Pole

The National Board of Review as a volunteer, public-spirited, organization receives its strength from the citizens who compose it. One of these citizens in whom not only the National Board but the entire country takes pride is Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd. There is no need to introduce Admiral Byrd to the readers of any publication but it is our pleasure to present him here as a member of the National Board's General Committee.—Editor's Note.

Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd

RICHARD EVELYN BYRD was born in Winchester, the heart of the famed Valley of Virginia, on October 25th, 1888. He attended the Shenandoah Valley Military Institute, V. M. I. and the University of Virginia and was graduated from the U. S. Naval Academy in 1912. Entering the field of aviation August, 1917, he became commander of the U. S. air forces of Canada July, 1918, and continued as such until the Armistice. His career in aviation outside of war time was marked when he served as commander of the aviation unit of the McMillan Polar Expedition in 1925. From then his achievements are so well known that it is unnecessary to relate them here. But we wish to note his interest in motion pictures. Biographies of Admiral Byrd tell of the fascination adventure has had for him ever since his early boyhood days so it is not surprising that exploration by aviation should be his life work and that he should utilize in this work the motion picture, another invention of the present age. Although his life of action precludes the need which most people have of satisfying their thirst for adventure vicariously through the screen, he realizes, however, the importance of the motion picture. This we know, for it was the privilege of the National Board to prepare the film library which was taken

(*Continued on page* 5)

Where Are the Talkies Getting To?

By James Shelley Hamilton

WHEN the motion picture, growing out of a mechanical invention, found itself quite inevitably evolving into an art, it found itself up against something that no art ever met with before. So far as it followed other arts—the drama, literature, painting and so on—it wasn't pure motion picture. All the tradition that it tried on during its first gropings was, in the long run, a misfit—it had, slowly and experimentally, to create its own traditions, and that in the face of extremely practical considerations in an extremely practical age. At a bound it found itself fabulously prosperous, and it could not sacrifice prosperity to untried idealism. Also —what no other art ever had to consider particularly—it had to reckon with mechanical progress.

The reproduction of sound with motion pictures was a purely mechanical step which threw the whole march of the motion picture out of order. The silent movies had got to the point where many remarkable things had been done. Above all, it had got to the point where only the good things were getting by. The ordinary program kind of thing, roasted, boiled, hashed and re-hashed, had become so monotonous to even the patient appetite of the great public that picture houses were going back to vaudeville to attract audiences. A new invention revolutionized everything—the novelty of sound from the screen sent all the producers into a wild rush of talkie productions, regardless of whether they knew anything about the new medium or not.

Of course no one knew anything about it at first, and the first pictures were pretty terrible. In a panic of ignorance producers turned, as they had turned in the early days of silent pictures, to the stage. All that the motion picture had learned about itself went for a brief time into the discard and we had talkies that were as inflexible as daguerreotypes to look at and as hard to listen to as scratchy phonograph discs back when we used to listen to them through rubber tubes.

But technicians were working with astonishing speed to perfect the new mechanism, and though the perfection hasn't been reached, there has been so much improvement that with good projection it is no longer torture to sit through a sound picture. At the same time producers seem to have got somewhat over their panic and, realizing that the mere novelty of hearing moving shadows talk was sure to be short-lived, they have begun to recall what they had been learning about moving pictures in their silent form.

Under the circumstances it isn't quite reasonable to look for anything just yet so completely good that it belongs in the permanent gallery of fine films. Anything like *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari,* for instance, or *Arsenal,* or the Chaplin comedies. But talkies have gone far enough for it not to be too amazing if one did appear, any day. Understanding of the new medium has grown so rapidly that there may be something being done even now that will be a peak and not a mere stepping stone.

One of the most obvious things for the talkies to bring at once to the screen was music —singing. The theme song was the most obvious element of this most obvious thing—no picture could pretend to be a sound picture without one, and Hollywood suffered one of its inevitable invasions of specialists, this time song writers. Theme songs are now so definitely on the wane that producers are taking the trouble to announce that they will *not* be features of this next year's product.

The first picture of the distinctive new type, different from the old silent pictures and just as different from a stage production, naturally made use of the new opportunities for music, *The Broadway Melody.* It was also the first really big hit, and started an avalanche of back-stage pictures which has lasted for months. Already this picture would probably seem a bit old-fashioned, so quickly developments come, but it has a sure and important place in sound picture history.

The inevitable rush to put musical comedies on the screen resulted in just what might have been expected: lavish photographs in action, without much attention to what would

have had the most attention if such things had been done in the silent medium—cinematic technique. The novelty of hearing the singers sing, hearing the music by which the dancers danced, was considered enough, particularly if some Technicolor could be sandwiched in somewhere. But the habit of building motion pictures as pictures apparently has a hold on some of the directors—they grew up in movies and merely photographing stage action was not enough for them in spite of the prevalent notion that that was the thing to do. *Sunny Side Up* came along, just as much a movie as if it had no dialogue and no signing, and set a new standard for screen musical comedy. Following it so quickly that they could not have been imitations—the same germ must have been working simultaneously in different studios—came more of the same genre, though in different setting: *The Love Parade, Devil May Care,* and others on the way. Sometime, not very far off, we shall have a distinctly cinematic combination of drama and music, which may easily range from something like grand opera (though it will surely be livelier and more human) to the fluffiest type of operetta and musical farce.

Two of the best productions of the year were probably made because their stories allowed the use of plenty of music: *Hallelujah* and *Applause.* Here the camera, which had appeared to be permanently anchored to a stationary microphone, began to get itself disimmobilized and we had real motion pictures again, with sound an integral part of them and not mere trimming.

Melodrama, too, soon began to shake itself loose from the fossilizing influence of the stage. *Alibi, Bulldog Drummond,* some of the George Bancroft things, whatever you may think of their importance as drama, took early and important steps to get back to good cinema. A little later light comedy—the *This Thing Called Love* sort of thing—made its declaration of independence, and proved better on the screen than on the stage.

Where talkies will eventually get to is as academic a question as where movies themselves will get to. It is the same question, after all, unless you choose to insist that the silent screen is fundamentally a different thing from the audible screen. A contention which one would have a hard time proving. Personally I believe that, depending on the perfectibility of mechanical apparatus, talkies will go as far as a cash-paying public will encourage them to go. This same cash-paying public seems to be more articulate in its reactions to sound than it used to be to silent pictures. Audiences are known, frequently, to talk back to talkies, in the form of hoots and laughter and even ribald comment. Sappy love scenes do not go so well nowadays, when the full sappiness of them emerges in uttered words. It seems highly probable that many other trite and tedious things that were endured by the eyes will find it much harder sledding now that the ears as well can revolt against them. And so, in the long run, more pains will have to be taken to keep out of ruts.

Whether this public will do more than negatively squelch the tiresome and banal—and even that it may not do—and give a positive support to what is really good, remains to be seen. For the making of talkies is no more a pastime for philanthropists than the making of shoes. The supply will depend on the demand, and without any doubt will answer the demand.

From Pole to Pole

(*Continued from page* 3)

by Admiral Byrd on his South Pole expedition. The films suggested by the Board composing the library were most generously given by the various film companies. Admiral Byrd in a letter to the National Board expressed his appreciation for the assembling of the library and the arranging for the loan of a projection machine, which he considered an essential part of the expedition equipment. At the time of our Annual Conference last year a radiogram from Little America stated, "Paramount's cameramen tell me they are going to bring back a good picture showing our experiences here on the ice for you fellows to look over." Here is an instance of motion pictures serving their double function, that of entertainment and education. Of interest to all members and friends of the National Board will be the opportunity to hear the report on the use of the film library and to view the Expedition films upon the welcome return of Admiral Byrd and his associates.

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

WILTON A. BARRETT

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

The Love Parade

Directed by .....*Ernst Lubitsch*
Photographed by.....*Victor Milner*
Play "The Prince Consort" by Ernest Vajda

The Cast

Count Alfred.....*Maurice Chevalier*
Louise .....*Jeannette MacDonald*
Jacques .....*Lupino Lane*
Lulu .....*Lillian Roth*

WHAT makes this picture exceptional is the ease and smoothness with which it makes a quite definite advance in a new type of screen entertainment. Producers are calling it musical romance, and that name does as well as any other. It is our old friend of the theatre, musical comedy, with the addition of the kind of dramatic seriousness that began to come in as long aso as "Mlle. Modiste"—a dramatic seriousness that really went

Jeannette MacDonald and Maurice Chevalier in "The Love Parade"

no farther than having the heroine cry a little, usually as the finale to an act.

The Love Parade is a decade or two beyond all that—it is in fact as up-to-date a thing as you can find of its sort either on the screen or on the stage. The remnants of the old-style musical comedy are unobtrusive, and consist merely in having songs bob in now and then without any special reason, and in a comedian who thinks it comic to trip up and fall down. Which it frequently is.

The story is amusing. The queen of a small Ruritanian sort of kingdom is having a hard time complying with the demands of her cabinet that she marry. All the reasons of state that are advanced make no impression on her, but when there appears on the scene a gay young man who has been representing her diplomatically in Paris, she settles the whole question by giving him a title and making him her Prince Consort. He happens, though gay, to be the kind of young man who doesn't take kindly to being a figure head—even a royal figure head, and the latter part of the picture is the queen's struggle to keep him as a husband without giving him a man's place on her throne. She is completely defeated.

The combination of Ernst Lubitsch as director and Maurice Chevalier as star is exactly the right one to give this story the glitter and sparkle it requires. Without them, and without Jeanette MacDonald to balance Chevalier, it could easily have been much more expensive than smart. As it is, it is excellent entertainment of the kind that some people call sophisticated and nearly everyone will find delightful. There is no point in putting it under a searching critical analysis, any more than there is point in analyzing the charm of a lovely and lively woman.

Produced and distributed by Paramount.

THE new catalog containing the best entertainment films selected by the Review Committees of the National Board from pictures submitted during 1929, is now ready for distribution. The features and short subjects are listed with their audience suitability and as an aid to discriminate theatre attendance and in program building for special showings, this catalog will be most convenient and helpful. Price 25c.

General Crack

Directed by .....Alan Crosland
Photographed by .....Tony Gaudic
Novel by George Preedy

The Cast

General Crack.....John Barrymore
Maria Louisa .....Marian Nixon
Emperor Leopold .....Lowell Sherman
Gypsy Girl .....Armida

JOHN BARRYMORE'S position on the American stage made it seem an important event when he went to Hollywood to act in motion pictures. That was some little time ago, and season after season went by without any evidence that either motion

John Barrymore as "General Crack"

pictures or Mr. Barrymore's status as an actor had been at all changed. In fact, the Barrymore stock has been steadily going down, under the pressure of some pretty tawdry movies built mostly on the great lover theme.

General Crack is chiefly important because it goes a long way toward restoring Mr. Barrymore to the place where he belongs. Better writing and direction could have improved it. But Barrymore himself, now that he can talk, seems to have thrown away a lot of the spurious movieness that has clung to him in pictures, and shows himself at last the same person who used to act Richard and Hamlet. Moreover, it reawakens hopes long stifled, that he will bring something to the screen which it needs and which he can bring.

Produced and distributed by Warner

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

Family Programs

By Mrs. E. F. Miner

Vice President, Rutherford, N. J., Better Films Committee

Which shall it be Juniors' Matinees or Family Week-end Programs offering the solution for the problem of children's motion picture entertainment. Here follow two reports which tell how one Better Films Committee has successfully combined the two ideas. Such a plan of adaptation is possible to any community theatre since it is one to which when properly supported by the public the exhibitor can fully lend his approval with the assurance of return.—Editor's Note.

ALMOST any exhibitor will admit that it makes little difference what pictures are shown in his theatre on Friday and Saturday nights, the crowds will come anyway on that night. So it is customary to offer better attractions for other nights, in fact added inducements such as "China Nite" and "Silver Nite" are often instigated. Rutherford, N. J., is one of the exceptions that proves the rule and all because of its Better Films Committee.

Some four or five years ago the condition just mentioned prevailed in Rutherford but the Better Films Committee, then a very young organization, intent on the study of pictures and the support of the best, had aroused the interest of the local theatre manager by calling attention to all selected pictures shown at his theatre by means of the Photoplay Guide published weekly in the local newspaper. Repeatedly too, had he been approached regarding the showing of some exceptionally good photoplays and told that we could advertise them in schools, churches and clubs—something he had never been able to accomplish.

Convinced that the members of the Committee were not trying to run his theatre or to reform the entire movie world but that their purposes were purely altruistic, that they wanted better pictures and more of them but that they too wished the box office receipts to increase, he became most cordially cooperative in every way.

Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln* was brought to the public's attention through the schools, churches and other means. *Peter Pan* filled the house with 1,800 at a special matinee.

Following such preliminary work it was not a great step to the regular showing of better pictures for the week-end Family audience pictures suitable as the name implies for the entire family were presented, four in one month and the results were gratifying enough to establish them as a permanent feature.

An effort to get children to attend a matinee rather than go on a school night aroused the interest of the Better Films Committee. A survey made in clubs and P. T. A. groups proved conclusively however that a Saturday morning matinee would be unpopular in Rutherford. What then? A guest speaker solved the problem for us by suggesting that in addition to the regular Saturday afternoon program there be added a surprise feature—a party. This specialty to be given by local talent and indeed the suggestion was a happy one as later results disclosed. To the surprise feature were added short educational pictures equally pleasurable to the children. During the last year the management added the Kiddie Frolic proving to the Better Films Committee that the plan was a most successful one from the exhibitor's viewpoint.

Further proof of his belief in the Better Films Committee is furnished by the fact that he willingly pays all bills incurred by such programs and seems more than eager to arrange such programs as shall have the indorsement of the Committee.

If you are easily discouraged or do not like hard work then do not attempt family week-end programs. If on the other hand you do not mind all the difficulties the results will

be reward enough for you have secured for the community a much needed form of wholesome entertainment presented at the proper time.

And now the second plan—Editor.

Juniors' Matinees Are Introduced

By Mrs. J. A. Lovington

Chairman, Juniors' Matinees Committee, Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee

On Saturday, December 7th, at the Rivoli Theatre, the Rutherford Better Films Committee held the initial morning matinee for children, which, because of its success from every point of view, will be followed by similar performances the first Saturday morning of each month at 10:00 o'clock for the remainder of the current season.

To call this venture a success is really putting it too mildly. It was so much more than that! Perhaps the best method of explanation is by the time-worn system of facts and figures. Figures do not lie, but I fear that if I told you that apparently every child in Rutherford and environs was there you might doubt me. The theatre seats 1800 persons and by 10:15 there was scarcely a seat available and a line of children five feet deep waiting from the two box offices far out into the street where a special policeman was assisting them through the traffic and otherwise lining them up so that no time might be lost as they passed through the lobby into the theatre. But we wondered how we could ever seat them. It would indeed be unfair to disappoint those children who had so long been looking forward to seeing *Peter Pan,* so it was decided to ask those who were so fortunate as to already have seats to please "double up", which they willingly did. All adults present took one or in a few instances two children on their laps. But in spite of the crowded condition, everyone was happy and a general spirit of smiling good-will actually made itself felt through the audience.

Apparently the time was ripe for such an experiment. During the last five years the Better Films Committee, working in the local theatre always with the splendid cooperation of its manager, has been gradually gaining the confidence of the community, especially through its work with the Family Week-end Program, Children's Hour and Happy Hour features shown at the Saturday afternoon performances of previous seasons. This, added to the fact that the Committee is now introducing motion pictures to complement study classes in the schools has helped to make our children "movie-minded", and brought many to the matinee who had never before been to a motion picture theatre.

Too much can not be said of the splendid way in which various organizations of the town came forward and gave their cooperation and support. The Sunday Schools, Board of Education, St. Mary's Parochial School, Parent-Teacher Council, Parent-Teacher Association of each school, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Public Library as well as individuals who have a keen interest in anything which they believe is being done for the development and happiness of children, all worked with us in our publicity. A form letter was sent out, about fifty in numbers, which explained quite fully what we hoped to do and why we had come to feel that such entertainment was needed and desired. This was read by each of the Better Films Committee's representatives at a regular meeting of his organization. The local library had a very attractive and interesting display in the form of a book tie-up in both the adult and children's department. The theatre manager ran on the screen in the theatre for about ten days in advance, a long trailer which we wrote for him and had 10,000 hand-bills printed. These were distributed by members of the Parent-Teacher units to the children as they came out of school. The local newspaper as well as those of neighboring towns gave us generous space for several weeks ahead.

The entire Committee felt that it was the most gratifying work that they had ever done. Not for commercial gain (there could scarcely be any at ten cents admission), but for being in even the smallest way responsible for that two hours of unbounded happiness given those hundreds of children! What more remuneration could anyone ask?

THE Little Theatre Film Guild of New Haven (Conn.) is opening its doors twice on Saturdays with Special Showings for the children of the city. Mrs. Jack Crawford, who as Secretary of the Little Theatre Film Guild heads the Committee which is in charge of the programs for these performances, was in New York City recently selecting pictures and arranging bookings. She said that there was an increasing interest being shown in these matinees by the parents and schools and that they were being well supported. This group is particularly fortunate in being able to present both a morning and afternoon performance as they can thus supply motion picture entertainment which will not interfere with other Saturday plans for busy youngsters. A recent picture shown was *The Circus* with Charlie Chaplin. Tickets for these shows are on sale at the Children's Bookshop of New Haven as well as at the theatre box office. This is a plan, it seems, which combines convenience and publicity regarding the matinees.

MISS DOROTHY FULTON, Motion Picture Chairman, Ohio Federation of Women's Clubs, writes: "I do not know of any place I would rather be on January 23rd-25th than at the Conference of the National Board of Review in your city. I hope that the subscribers of the magazine will be given some account of it. It should prove very helpful to every one in attendance." It is heartening to receive such indications of interest from our readers who are unable to come. We are certainly assured of Miss Fulton's interest in things cinematic when we note her numerous activities in the field. Besides being State Chairman of Motion Pictures for the Ohio Federation she is Chairman of Better Films, Cincinnati Chapter, D. A. R. and the Cincinnati Women's Club, and Program Chairman of the Cincinnati Motion Picture Council so undoubtedly her days are busy ones.

In addition to the regular work of the Cincinnati Council such as getting out the Monthly List of Better Films, a special work is being conducted this year. Miss Fuller writes of it, "Our Council is doing a good work this winter in financing a survey in some of the public schools in regard to what books or stories the children would like to see filmed. I know now that their choice of themes are much better than any of us expected. This is very encouraging." We await with interest word from Miss Fulton upon the completion of this survey.

THE Montgomery County, Maryland Federation of Women's Clubs, is fortunate in having as chairman of its Motion Picture Division, Mrs. Mina Church Brann who brings so much enthusiasm and interest to the work. Early in the season Mrs. Brann mailed one hundred attractive little hand-colored cards to the various Clubs of the County. One side bore the words—"The Calendar with Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year from a Movie Fan." The last word, however, was not a word at all but a clever drawing of a colorful little fan such as a lady would waft on a summery day. On the reverse side was carried the information regarding the program of the monthly meetings for the season as follows:

Motion Picture Meetings 1929-30.
Place—9708 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethseda, Maryland.
Time—Each last Thursday, 10:30 A. M.
October—The Motion Picture and Community Interests.
November—Sound in the Motion Picture Theatre, Mr. N. D. Golden, U. S. Dept. of Commerce.
December—Model Program in the Motion Picture Theatre or Active Service in Community Activities at Christmas.
January—Visual Education.
February—Mrs. Frederick I. Mosher, State Chairman, Motion Pictures, Maryland Federation of Women's Clubs.
March, April, May—Subjects announced Later.
Open Meetings—All Welcome.

THE December mails brought us many Christmas cards from our members and friends. It was a pleasure indeed to receive these remembrances at the holiday time and we extend our sincere appreciation to all those whose cards of cheer added to the brightness of our Christmas mail.

BOOK WEEK received special attention from the Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee which might well be called "The Committee-always-on-the-look-out-for-co-operative-tying-up". Part of an interesting report follows: "A parade of children costumed to represent books and characters was held as a prologue to the Saturday morning matinee, as a culmination to the children's activities in observance of National Book Week. Miss Helen Daughtry, children's librarian at Washington Memorial Library, Mrs. George Beggs, city playground director, and Mrs. Malcolm Jones, of the department of juvenile dramatics at Wesleyan conservatory, supervised the parade. About 117 children dressed as books or book characters and groups from the Bibb Mills Athletic Association, Girls Reserves, Girl Scouts and the department of Junior Dramatics of Wesleyan, which formed the procession which marched down the aisles to the stage. On the stage the books and characters impersonated were announced by Mrs. J. A. Selden, Chairman of the Juniors' Matinee Committee. There were more girls dressed as 'Little Women' than any other selection. The next most popular characters were those from athletic stories. Other characters represented were 'William Green Hill', 'The Old Woman Who Lived in the Shoe', 'Pinocchio', 'Helen's Babies', 'Black Sambo', 'Overall Boys', 'Old-fashioned Girl', 'Hans Brinker', 'Sunbonnet Girls', 'Red Riding Hood', 'Peter Pan', 'Hansel and Gretel', 'Heidi', 'Cinderella', 'Robin Hood', 'Little Lord Fauntleroy' and 'David Copperfield.' The picture shown was Mary Pickford in *Little Lord Fauntleroy.*"

During the past month, according to the report of the chairman of Juniors' Matinees, 2,539 children have enjoyed the matinees sponsored by the Committee each Saturday at the Rialto. It was decided at the meeting that the Committee will cooperate with the Macon Flower Club by putting on a matinee in keeping with this idea. This matinee will be on April 19, preceding Flower Week.

THE New Jersey State D. A. R., the newest but one of the affiliated committees of the National Board, is creating interest in the better films movement throughout the entire state. The second meeting of the Committee was held at the home of Mrs. Leon A. McIntire in Newark on January 7th. Many chapter chairmen from different parts of the state were present and the meeting resulted in the appointment of better films chairmen in additional chapters. It was the pleasure of the Better Films Secretary to have the opportunity to talk to those assembled and it was encouraging to meet with such enthusiasm as that which Mrs. McIntire has brought about through her untiring efforts. In spite of the neweness of this Committee, Mrs. McIntire has compiled quite a scrapbook of interesting news items. Among them indicative of her work is the following clipped from one item in the Westfield (N. J.) Standard:

"At the November meeting of the Westfield Chapter, D. A. R., there was quite a large attendance and all were interested and entertained. Regent Clifford, presiding, introduced Mrs. Leon McIntire, State Chairman of Better Films, who spoke on that subject. Mrs. McIntire first gave some most interesting statistics, the figures being almost as startling in size as those pertaining to astronomy and its stars. The great changes made by the introduction of the 'talkies' was touched on, and some very illuminating data given as to the processes of selection and so on. Mrs. McIntire spoke of the power of the D. A. R. organization in moulding public opinion, and denounced censorship while strongly favoring selection. She had many new and good ideas for arousing the public interest in the use of better films and was heartily applauded at the close of her most interesting talk."

THE Charlotte (N. C.) Better Films Committee held an election of officers at its December meeting. New officers and committee chairmen were elected with Mrs. J. E. Reilley as president and Mrs. W. L. Butt as review committee chairman. This Committee conducts very effective work with children and it is not confined solely to motion picture entertainment as a recent announcement from the president indicates. This announcement says, "In an effort to cooperate with the Parent-Teacher Association in giving luncheons to under-nourished children in the city schools, the Committee has contributed

(*Continued on page* 19)

Selected Pictures Guide

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

Frances C. Barrett
Helen Cahill

EDITOR

Bettina Gunczy

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience including children. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of grammar school age.

Family audience including young people. Pictures acceptable to adults and also interesting to and wholesome for boys and girls of High School age.

Mature audience Pictures recommended for the consideration and enjoyment of adults.

Note—Programs for Junior Matinees should be selected from pictures in the first classification.

*—*Pictures especially interesting or well done but not necessarily "exceptional."*

The Aviator

Directed by .....*Roy Del Ruth*
Featuring ..... *Edward Everett Horton*, *Patsy Ruth Miller*

Screen story by Robert Lord and Arthur Caesar

A NOVICE in an aeroplane is always an amusing spectacle but when the novice has the reputation of being a crack flyer and when the part is played by Edward Everett Horton, the situation becomes hilarious. The story concerns a famous novelist, terrified by anything that takes him off the ground, who agrees to assume authorship of a book on aeroplanes. He finds himself everywhere feted as the hero of the skies and the girl he loves looks at him admiringly. While sitting in an aeroplane to have his picture taken, he unfortunately releases the control and off he goes, swooping through the air, turning somersaults, flying upside down and even sweeping under bridges and through tunnels—all of which erratic flying brings him further acclaim. At last he is entered into a contest with a brilliant aviator. His antics in the air are so remarkably dangerous that at the end of the flight, his sweetheart makes him promise never to fly again.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—7 reels)

Behind the Make-Up

Directed by .....*Robert Milton*
Featuring .....*Hal Skelly*

Story "The Feeder" by Mildred Cram

HAL SKELLY, as Hap Brown, the happy-go-lucky, easy-going vaudeville actor but suffering from a bad inferiority complex, is in love with a waitress. He meets an actor who has seen better days and forms a partnership with him but he is soon dominated and when he makes suggestions they are discarded as being worthless. They try out the new artistic sketches prepared by his new-found friend and are complete failures and that is the last of the partnership. Poverty-stricken Hap accepts a job in the restaurant where his sweetheart works but she will not hear of marriage professing only friendship. One night they go to the theatre and see the former friend in a series of skits which Hap had written. They team up together again and Hap loses his girl to the other man but later finds promise of success and reunion with her. The acting of Hal Skelly strikes a rather realistic human note.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—8 reels)

The Bishop Murder Case

Directed by ..... {*Nick Grinde* / *David Burton*}
Featuring ..... *Basil Rathbone*
Novel by S. S. Van Dine

PHILO VANCE, the scientific detective created by S. S. Van Dine, has quite a case to unravel when murder after murder takes place with apparently no or very scanty clews, and the people who possess these clews are murdered before they are able to divulge their knowledge. There is always present somewhere near the victim or in his hand a black chess bishop and just when the chase seems hopeless Vance eliminates all the suspects and denounces the monster. The story is well worked out and the suspense is sustained.

For the mature audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Blaze O'Glory

Directed by ..... {*Renaud Hoffman* / *George J. Crone*}
Featuring ..... *Eddie Dowling*
Story by Thomas Boyd

A YOUNG boy returns home from the War, gassed, and finds that there is no place for him although he had been a star in the Follies when he enlisted. One night while waiting for his wife to return home he goes to the window and sees her talking to a man in the street below and from what he hears he thinks his honor is impeached so he shoots the man. At the trial his lawyer conducts the defense so ably and tells a story with such a dramatic climax that he is exonerated. The singing and acting of the featured player is worthy of commendation.

For family audience including young people.
(Sono Art—World Wide—10 Reels)

Broadway Hoofer

Directed by ..... *George Archainbaud*
Featuring ..... {*Marie Saxon* / *Jack Egan*}
Screen story by Gladys Lehman

IN this film Marie Saxon plays the part of a well known Broadway dancer who, while vacationing in a small town, is drawn into a third-rate burlesque show. Jack Egan, with his fine voice, is its manager and star. Of course, they fall in love and the girl puts off returning to Broadway in order to finish up the season with him. Her manager finally traces her and the boy, learning her identity, tells her she has made a fool of him and disappears. Before very long, however, she finds him and he becomes her partner in her new show. The dancing and singing of these two players are excellent and the film is a most enjoyable one.

For family audience including young people.
(Columbia—7 reels)

City Girl

Directed by ..... *F. W. Murnau*
Featuring ..... {*Charles Farrell* / *Mary Duncan*}
Novel "The Mud Turtle" by Elliott Lester

AGAIN Charles Farrell plays the innocent country boy and Mary Duncan is the city girl who wins his heart. She is a waitress who dreams of one day escaping from her dreary city life into the country. To the lunch counter, where she wisecracks with her customers, comes the boy, venturing into the big city to sell his father's wheat. They are attracted to each other immediately and, when he leaves the next day for the farm, she comes with him as his wife. The father, who loves his wheat above all else and holds his family in complete submission to that love, is furious at his son's marriage, believing that the girl is a scheming fortune-hunter. She tries without success to win his approval but finally he allows himself to be won over. Some of the shots are excellent and the fine acting of the cast make it an entertaining picture.

For family audience including young people.
(Fox—7 reels)

*Condemned

Directed by ..... *Wesley Ruggles*
Featuring ..... {*Ronald Colman* / *Ann Harding*}
Novel "Condemned to Devil's Island" by Blair Niles

THIS melodrama with France's penal island as its locale depicts lovely Ann Harding as the wife of the bullying warden and Ronald Colman as the debonair young

man who has stolen just once too often. The warden appoints him as a servant to his wife and they become infatuated but never tell one another of their feelings. The woman of the island gossip though and the harm is done. They make a desperate effort to escape but it only results in Madame Vidal being sent to France and Michel being returned to serve another term both vowing everlasting faithfulness. The acting of these two outstanding stars make this picture well worth seeing.

For family audience including young people.

(United Artists—10 reels)

Courtin' Wildcats

Directed by ..... *Jerome Storm*
Featuring ..... *Hoot Gibson*
Story by William Dudley Pelley

IN this comedy-drama Hoot Gibson poses as a weakling to deceive his family, as he has no idea of going into his father's foundry. The family doctor sees through the ruse and suggests that he be put to work in a wild west show. In the show is a so-called man-hater and Hoot endeavors to convince her of the error of her way of thinking and succeeds. The shots of his wild and reckless driving add thrills to the picture.

For family audience including children.

(Universal—6 reels)

Dance Hall

Directed by ..... *Melville Brown*
Featuring ..... *Arthur Lake*, *Olive Borden*
Story by Vina Delmar

IN *Dance Hall* we have a dance-mad young boy, played by Arthur Lake who admirably suits the role, in love with a dance hall hostess. Strangely enough, she is a sweet, sincere girl who, in turn, loves a handsome but, alas, fickle aviator, the object of the boy's hero worship. Then comes news that the man's plane is wrecked and the girl collapses. The boy takes her to his mother and they nurse her back to life. The aviator survives but they find that he is unworthy of the girl and then, miraculously, she discovers that it is the young boy she really loves. The atmosphere of the dance hall with its devotees, executing their extraordinary dance steps, and its owner, a very comical old man, is admirably carried out.

For family audience including young people.

(R K O—7 reels)

Footlights and Fools

Directed by ..... *William Seiter*
Featuring ..... *Colleen Moore*
Story by Katherine Brush

FIFI d'AURAY, the latest French sensation of New York, during her chorus days as plain Betty Murphy fell in love with a youth whose visible means of support seemed to be betting on the races. A wealthy friend of hers gives him a position and a chance to make good but he does not take advantage of it and becomes involved in an embezzlement so she comes to recognize the worth of the man who tried so unselfishly to aid her in her love affair although it was to his own disadvantage.

For family audience including young people.

(First National—8 reels)

Hell's Heroes

Directed by ..... *William Wyler*
Featuring ..... *Charles Bickford*, *Raymond Hatton*, *Fred Kohler*
Story "The Three Godfathers" by Peter B. Kyne

DRAMATIC story of three men who have fled to the desert after holding up a bank and killing the teller. In the midst of the desert they find a wagon and inside a young mother, the wife of the murdered man, who is dying. They promise her they will care for the child and take it back to New Jerusalem, the one town in the world that they can not enter, realizing that lynching awaits them. On this situation the drama is based and one's interest is held throughout.

For family audience including young people.

(Universal—7 reels)

His First Command

Directed by ..... *Gregory LaCava*
Featuring ..... *William Boyd*
Screen story by Jack Jungmeyer and James Gleason

TERRY CULVER, the spoiled, conceited young son of a millionaire, joins the U. S. Cavalry to be near a girl who he has

seen and decides he is in love with. But he finds army life no bed of roses. Of course there is a superior officer who is his rival and there are many hours spent in the guard house tor insubordination but for all the trials and tribulations he decides army life is the only one. The cavalry scenes and maneuvers at historic Fort Riley, Kansas, are unusually interesting.

For family audience including children.

(Pathe—6 reels)

Hot for Paris

Directed by .....*Raoul Walsh*
Featuring .....*Victor McLaglen*

Screen story by Raoul Walsh

A SUPER - SOPHISTICATED comedy built around the winner of the Grand Prix at Longchamps. A sailor, unconscious of the fact, is the lucky man and mistakes the efforts of the officials to inform him of his good fortune, having wrecked a hotel on his previous trip. After many hilarious experiences he and his pal, El Brendel, are "forced" to accept the money and they entertain their new found French friends royally. The skillful direction and clever acting save the picture from vulgarity.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—7 reels)

The Laughing Lady

Directed by .....*Victor Schertzinger*
Featuring .....*Ruth Chatterton*

Play by Alfred Sutro

A WOMAN is divorced by her husband on circumstantial evidence and is deprived of the custody of her child. She believes her husband's lawyer is responsible and determines to seek revenge. After carefully working out a plot and just as the climax has been reached she discovers that she is in love with him but believes it is too late. He however, takes matters into his own hands. Miss Chatterton continues to score in the talking dramas.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Lilies of the Field

Directed by .....*Alexander Korda*
Featuring .....*Corinne Griffith*

Screen story by William Hurlburt

DRAMA of divorce and intrigue. A young wife listens in utter bewilderment to the testimony of her husband and a detective he has employed at his divorce proceedings. Nothing matters to her anymore except the loss of her child which the court has given to her husband. She goes on the stage and determines to play the game straight hoping some day to recover her beloved baby. Finally she finds happiness and a love that will last.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

The Lone Star Ranger

Directed by .....*A. F. Erickson*
Featuring .....*George O'Brien*, *Sue Carol*

Story by Zane Grey

A WESTERN drama rife with outlaws, cattle-rustlers and rangers. A boy who has been living under a cloud, having shot a man in self-defense and then because of this been accused of many crimes he knew nothing of, joins the rangers to prove his innocence. A love story is deftly woven in and the picture abounds in beautiful scenery and skillful riding.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—7 reels)

The Lost Zeppelin

Directed by.....*Edward Sloman*
Featuring .....*Conway Tearle*, *Virginia Valli*

Story by John F. Natterford

DOWN to the icy region of the South Pole goes a dirigible, captained by a man who, just before leaving his lovely wife, learns that she loves his lieutenant. They fly through tropical storms, where their engines are impaired, then through dense snowstorms, where the ship is weighed down by snow and ice, until they are finally forced to land. Here, with their radio wrecked, surrounded by fields of snow and driven hither and thither by the icy blasts which never cease, the

crew is gradually swallowed up by the white emptiness around them and the captain and his lieutenant are left alone. Finally they are found by an aeroplane sent out to search for them. Since it can carry but one passenger, the captain, remembering his wife's love for the other man, chooses to stay behind. The film is excellently photographed so that the story of the disastrous trip to the South Pole is full of thrills.

For family audience including children.

(Tiffany—8 reels)

Love Comes Along

Directed by ..... *Rupert Julian*
Featuring ..... *Bebe Daniels*
Play "Conchita" by Edward Knoblock

THE lovely actress who astounded her audience with her fine voice in *Rio Rita,* lives up to her reputation in this film. Here, in the part of an ex-chorus girl, singing in a cabaret in a tropical port, she is given plenty of opportunity to charm her listeners. She loves a sailor boy whose ship is anchored at the port for a few days, but her admirer, the uncrowned monarch of the land, drives him away. Of course, the sailor returns in time to save his lady. The picture is a nicely filmed, melodious production.

For family audience including young people.

(R K O—8 reels)

The Marriage Playground

Directed by ..... *Lothar Mendes*
Featuring ..... *Mary Brian, Fredric March*
Novel "The Children" by Edith Wharton

A FAMILY of seven children are left to wander around the resorts of Europe mothered by the eldest child, as their parents, divorce-mad, take no responsibility. A young American takes them under his wing and succeeds in giving them the sane home life they crave. This adaptation of the Wharton novel has been interestingly portrayed and the cast headed by Miss Brian and Mr. March selected with care.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Night Ride

Directed by ..... *John S. Robertson*
Featuring ..... *Joseph Schildkraut*
Screen story by Henry La Cossitt

NEWSPAPER drama concerning a young reporter who does not allow anything, even love, to interfere with his work. At the scene of a murder which he is sent to cover he finds a cigarette upon which he bases his clue accusing an underworld character called Tony. The boy is called away immediately after his marriage to work on the story and encounters Tony who threatens to take him for a ride and also threatens the life of his bride. After many harrowing experiences he scores the biggest "scoop" of the year.

For family audience including young people.

(Universal—6 reels)

No, No, Nanette

Directed by ..... *Clarence Badger*
Featuring ..... *Bernice Claire, Alexander Gray*
Musical comedy by Mandel, Harbach, Youmans and Nyitray

AND still another popular Broadway musical comedy has been successfully transferred to the screen. This entertaining story concerns a rather eccentric, unsophisticated millionaire who thinks he can give lovely things to pretty young girls and not incur the wrath of his wife and incite suspicion in others. In his desire to spend money to make others happy he finances a musical comedy which unexpectedly becomes a huge success. The picture abounds in much clever comedy, good singing and dancing and spectacular sets.

For family audience including young people.

(First National—10 reels)

Officer O'Brien

Directed by ..... *Tay Garnett*
Featuring ..... *William Boyd*
Screen story by Tom Buckingham

AS the pride of the police force, William Boyd, finds it a bit awkward to have for a father a jailbird whom he has gotten out of prison in his parole. Ernest Torrence plays the part and gives his usual fine characterization. Before he is made to realize the harm he is doing his son, he has stolen and hidden a number of jewels. Attempting to recover and return them, for his son's sake, he gets mixed up with a notorious criminal whom the boy is trying to trap. The picture is full of suspense and offers fine entertainment.

For the mature audience.

(Pathe—7 reels)

The Painted Angel

Directed by .....*Millard Webb*
Featuring .....*Billie Dove*
Story "Give This Little Girl a Big Hand" by Fannie Hurst

THIS romance of night club life has all the ear-marks of being a burlesque on the Queen of the Night Clubs. Mamie Hudler, an entertainer in a New Orleans cafe, thinks she will find life better in Havana and from there she goes to San Francisco where a rich oil man gives her financial aid and she, with her family and her violinist who is always present to protect her whether it be from gangsters, rich planters or oil men, comes to New York, under the name of Rodeo West to make her fortune. She opens a night club where she mothers her girls which results in many rich marriages for them. In spite of difficulties with her grafting and grasping family she at last discovers true love.

For family audience including young people.
(First National—7 reels)

Peacock Alley

Directed by .....*Marcel de Sano*
Featuring .....*Mae Murray*
Novel by Carey Wilson

THIS production brings to the screen the popular actress Mae Murray in her first all-talkie. A famous dancer who has reached success after a rather hard struggle can not convince the man she loves that marriage is not an old-fashioned idea. A bungling detective who is determined to rid a fashionable hotel's Peacock Alley of its loiterers nearly causes tragedy through his false impressions and by his interference. The sets are lavish and Miss Murray dances in her own inimitable way in two scenes which are done in technicolor.

For the mature audience.
(Tiffany—7 reels)

Pointed Heels

Directed by .....*A. Edward Sutherland*
Featuring .....*Fay Wray*, *Helen Kane*
Story by Charles Brackett

ANOTHER story of back-stage life but with the added attraction of having the excellent comedian, Skeets Gallagher, and the "boop-boopa-doop" girl, Helen Kane, in the cast. Fay Wray as the eldest sister marries a young composer but is persuaded to return to the stage since she is only a drawback to her young husband as his mother has stopped his allowance and he can not continue his studies. There is much singing and dancing and clever repartee with some heartbreaks added but love triumphs over the latter and all are happy.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—7 reels)

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*Seven Days Leave

Directed by .....*Richard Wallace*
Featuring .....*Gary Cooper*
Play "The Old Lady Shows Her Medals" by Sir James M. Barrie

AN old widowed Scotch scrub woman is heartbroken that she has no son in the War—all the other scrubwomen—everyone in London has someone to be proud of. She reads in the paper of a young Canadian in the "Black Watch" regiment who has the same name as her own and she decides to adopt him. The boy learns of "his mother" from a Red Cross worker while in a hospital. He goes to see her and offers to take her on probation. She insists that he spend his leave with her and they have a happy holiday seeing London together and she is able to hold her head very high when confronted with the other "scrub ladies." He is sent to Flanders and does not return but the little old lady receives his medals awarded to her boy for bravery posthumously and she marches off to work with her head high to "carry on." This excellent story is creditably produced and the acting of Gary Cooper and Beryl Mercer is very fine indeed.

For family audience including young people.
(Paramount—9 reels)

Seven Keys to Baldpate

Directed by.....*Reginald Barker*
Featuring .....*Richard Dix*
Novel by Earl Derr Biggers

THIS old thriller has now become a most effective talkie with Richard Dix doing better work than ever before. In the depth of winter, a novelist, to win a bet, goes to a deserted summer hotel, to write a novel in

twenty-four hours. He is given the one and only key to the resort but, lo and behold, through the night, six other keys turn up variously owned by a crooked politician, another scoundrel, a scheming woman, and others who make Baldpate the scene of their crimes. The wind howls around the house, a mad hermit flitters in and out, a large amount of money changes hands several times at the point of a gun, until finally everything is cleared up and once more Baldpate becomes a safe and sane summer hotel.

For family audience including young people.

(R K O—8 reels)

The Shannons of Broadway

Directed by .....*Emmett Flynn*
Featuring .....*James and Lucille Gleason*
Play by James Gleason

AN amusing comedy of a vaudeville team who are stranded in a New England town in the midst of winter. They decide to buy the one hotel the town boasts of and make their fortune since the career they had chosen does not seem profitable and they go through many experiences before they realize their ambition. This picture was one of Broadway's favorite plays a few seasons ago and the fact that it stars the Gleasons who were the original "Shannons" makes this a successful talkie.

For family audience including young people.

(Universal—7 reels)

The Sky Hawk

Directed by .....*John G. Blystone*
Featuring .....*John Garrick, Helen Chandler, Gilbert Emery*
Story "Chap Called Bardell" by Llewellyn Hughes

THIS drama of the World War brings to the screen an Engish actor, John Garrick, who has long been a favorite in Europe and he is far from disappointing. A young aviator, through malicious gossip, is thought to have crashed his plane to keep from going to the front and the only ones who believe in him are the girl he loves and a mechanic. In the crash he has injured his leg and is unable to walk but with the aid of Tom, the mechanic, he rigs up an old plane with parts from wrecked ones and on a night when a German zeppelin makes a raid he goes up and fights it alone and needless to say, glory is all his. The flying sequences are unusually well done with especial emphasis on the battle with the zeppelin.

For family audience including young people.

(Fox—7 reels)

So Long Letty

Directed by.....*Lloyd Bacon*
Featuring.....*Charlotte Greenwood*
Play by Elmer Harris

THAT excellent comedienne, Charlotte Greenwood, holds sway as the beauty parlor maniac who neglects home and husband to satisfy her craving for facial treatment. Her husband, in despair, seeks the company of the little home girl next door who, in turn, is neglected by her husband because she is too quiet and old-fashioned. The two ladies decide to let their husbands change places for a week at the end of which time their temporary wives will have given them such an overdose of the life they think they want that they will homeward fly. It is an entertaining farce with some peppy dancing, singing and ridiculous nonsense by Charlotte Greenwood.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—6 reels)

Their Own Desire

Directed by .....*E. Mason Hopper*
Featuring .....*Norma Shearer*
Novel by Sarita Fuller

HEARTBROKEN when she discovers that her father has a clandestine affair with another woman, a modern young girl takes her mother to a resort and there meets a young man with whom she falls very much in love. After promising to marry him she discovers that he is the son of the woman in the case and she tells him they must part. The boy and girl go for a farewell ride in his motorboat and are caught in a storm. Their craft is found the next morning. The search for their children brings knowledge of the error of their ways to the stunned parents and when they are at last found all is serene. Miss Shearer's fine acting compensates for the lack of story value.

For family audience including young people.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—7 reels)

Tiger Rose

Directed by ..... *George Fitzmaurice*
Featuring ..... *Lupe Velez*, *Monte Blue*
Play by Willard Mack

ROMANCE of the Northwest. Rose, the adopted daughter of the Hudson Bay Company representative at Loon River, is the most sought after girl in the post. Devlin, the sergeant of the Mounted Police seems to be the favored one until there appears on the scene a young engineer, Bruce Norton. The natives incensed at the invasion of these men who have come to break the peace and beauty of their country, are only too willing to blame a murder on the young boy when all circumstances point against him. After many breath taking escapes from the posse the boy and girl start down the river in a canoe only to discover Devlin under a blanket but he, learning of their love returns and announces that they have gone "over the rapids". The scenery is unusually beautiful and the cast is good.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—6 reels)

NON-FEATURES

The Enchanted Forest

Technicolor: A woods becomes filled with dancing fairies in a little girl's dream.

For family audience including children.
(Tiffany—1 reel)

Interesting Tails

(Sportlight Series)

The artist, Margaret Krimse, sketches her dogs. Very interesting.

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Mountain Melodies

(Robert Bruce Scenic)

Song number with a background of beautiful lakes and mountains.

For family audience including children.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review Nos. 33-36

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Pathe Review Nos. 46-50

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Pathe Review Nos. 51-52

For family audience including young people.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Sport A La Carte

(Sportlight Series)

Shots of children playing football—future gridiron heroes.

For family audience including children.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Steeplechase

(Sporting Youth Series)

A girl takes the place of a jockey who is planning to throw the race.

For family audience including children.
(Universal—2 reels)

SHORT COMEDIES

The Flattering Word

(Vitaphone No. 3238-9)

This comedy with a deft touch handles the problem of Sunday showings.

For family audience including young people.
(Warner—2 reels)

(*Continued from page* 11)

$200.00 for immediate use and will donate 50 percent of the proceeds of the Juniors' Matinees." Often you hear asked the question—Should Junior's Matinees be run for profit to the Better Films Committee? This seems to offer an unquestionable answer.

Mrs. Butt, chairman of the review committee, sends us regularly a report of the activities of her committee. The latest one states, "We have twelve members on the review committee, assigning three at each theatre monthly. The monthly meetings are well attended and it is most gratifying that the resident manager is always present to cooperate with the committee and the committee also cooperates with the manager. Consequently the work moves on very smoothly and successfully. The Saturday matinee is always a feature for discussion and as it is sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Association it naturally is a success. Varied programs make our monthly meetings interesting and enjoyable."

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

offers through its

AFFILIATED BETTER FILMS COMMITTEES

An Opportunity to Promote Better Motion Picture Programs in Your Home Theatre

The Better Films Committee, or Motion Picture Study Club, plan has been found by many committees to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

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Sample Copy of the Magazine		free
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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. V, No. 2 February, 1930

MAR 4 1930

Scene from "Anna Christie (*see page* 12)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures
70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

20 cents a copy $2.00 a year

NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve witnout pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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MAR -4 1930

NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW MAGAZINE

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Our Conclave in Retrospect

THE Motion Picture as a Social Study proved to be a phase of motion picture consideration having an appeal to Better Films Committee members, and all those interested in better films, for the recent Sixth Annual Conference under the auspices of the Better Films National Council of the National Board of Review built around this subject brought together more people than any previous Conference and more people with a serious interest toward the subject.

The keynote of the Conference was struck by Dr. Louis I. Harris, who as a member of the Executive Committee of the National Board offered the salutation to the visiting delegates, when he said "I wish for you out of this Conference a wealth of enthusiasm, a crystallization of ideas, a banding together in even more solid ranks for the purposes that inspire you and I hope that the speakers will bring to you something that will reinterpret the things we have talked about for years and give new meaning and new significance to our discussions."

This was done by authoritative educators, research and social workers who contributed addresses upon the theme of the Conference. Those speaking included Dr. Joseph L. Holmes, Department of Psychology, Columbia University; Dr. William H. Dudley, Regional Distributor, Yale Chronicles of America Photoplays, former Chief, Bureau of Visual Education, University of Wisconsin; Dr. Lee F. Hanmer, Director, Department of Recreation, Russell Sage Foundation; Dr. Walter W. Pettit, Director, Department of Community Organization, New York School of Social Work; and Dr. Francis D. Tyson, Professor of Economics, University of Pittsburgh.

The exhibitor's viewpoint was treated by Mr. Edward Fay of Providence, R. I., a theatre manager of long experience. "A Woman Writer Looks at Motion Pictures" was the topic which offered Miss Sophie Kerr an opportunity to give some thought-provoking ideas. Gilbert Seldes, author and critic, presented a number of penetrating observations on "The Art of the Motion Picture."

Warner Brothers graciously provided their private Little Theatre for an interesting Conference evening event. The first John Barrymore talking film *General Crack* was shown to the delegates who were cordially greeted by Mr. Harry M. Warner, president of the Warner Brothers.

The second evening session was likewise an extremely interesting one according to the viewpoint of the Conference guests. It was held at Roosevelt House, the birthplace of Theodore Roosevelt, with Mrs. Douglas Robinson, his sister, receiving. One of the early Roosevelt films *Roosevelt's Return from Europe in 1910* brought delighted responses from the audience, proving again the value of preserving the historical film.

Two round table sessions gave to all an opportunity to talk of motion picture problems and achievements. These discussion sessions were ably presided over by Prof. Leroy E. Bowman, Department of Sociology, Columbia

University and Mrs. James A. Craig, President, Jacksonville (Fla.) Better Films Council, and many delegates contributed valuable suggestions from their experience.

The Conference was brought to a close by the Fifteenth Annual Luncheon of the National Board held in the ballroom of the Hotel Roosevelt on Saturday, January 25th. Dr. George W. Kirchwey, Department of Criminology, New York School of Social Work, former Warden of Sing Sing Prison, acted as toastmaster and introduced the speakers and screen celebrities. The luncheon addresses for the most part followed the Conference idea of the Social Study of the Motion Picture there being presented phases of the motion picture as it touches other great forces of social endeavor. Dr. Harry E. Barnard, Director, White House Conference for Child Health and Protection called by President Hoover, outlined the scope of this Conference and the part the motion picture has in any survey of child life. Other speakers were Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross, former Governor of Wyoming and Vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee; Mr. Harry M. Warner, President of Warner Bros. Pictures Corporation; Miss Fannie Hurst, novelist; Hon. Franklin W. Fort, Congressman from New Jersey and Secretary of the Republican National Committee; Mayor John T. Alsop of Jacksonville, Florida and Mr. John M. Casey, Amusement Inspector of Boston, Mass., representing Mayor James H. Curley of that city.

The Conference and Luncheon addresses will appear in forthcoming issues of this Magazine so that a file of the Magazines will provide proceedings of the meetings for which quite a number of our friends have asked.

A resolution was adopted at the final session of the Conference containing the thought which had found expression and response through the Conference. It is as follows:

RESOLVED, That this conference reaffirm its support of:

(1) The Better Films and Motion Picture Study Club Plan as interpreted and carried forward by the National Board of Review and its affiliated groups.

(2) Unfaltering opposition to legal censorship, federal and state.

(3) Stimulation of new local effort, and further organization for a better screen, with national contact and research aid secured through the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

It is a very great pleasure for the members of the National Board's different committees and its staff to welcome the Conference visitors. We strive at this annual coming together to give something to them and to get something from them of hope and inspiration to continue through the year and when the Conference is a success then great indeed is our pleasure. The following quotations from some of the many letters received in the few days since the Conference help to assure the belief that it was such.

"It was most instructive as well as pleasant to meet so many active workers and the hours were very full of interest."—Mrs. William H. Pouch, Chairman, Better Films Committee, Northern Division, National Society, D. A. R.

"I wish we could have several representatives each year—nothing inspires and helps you so much as these meetings."—Mrs. W. L. Butt, Chairman, Review Committee, Charlotte (N. C.) Better Films Committee.

"I came home more enthusiastic than ever and also feeling that since we have become affiliated with the National Board we are going about our work in an intelligent and proper way. The Conference brought out many points of interest and helpfulness and especially the Round Table sessions when we could learn from each other practical experiences and so forth."—Mrs. Leon A. McIntire, Chairman, Better Films Committee, New Jersey State D. A. R.

"Had a wonderful time at the Conference and the interest was most gratifying."—Mrs. James A. Craig, President, Better Films Council of Jacksonville (Fla.).

"Your Conference was a great success."—Mrs. Ray D. Champlin, Corresponding Secretary, Motion Picture Study Club, Oneonta (N. Y.).

"The Conference was very well worthwhile and a huge success."—Mrs. Alberta Clark, President, Cleveland (Ohio) Cinema Club.

(*Continued on page* 11)

Public Service on Motion Pictures

By Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross

The National Board of Review was happy to have as a speaker at its Fifteenth Annual Luncheon Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross. Mrs. Ross as former Governor of Wyoming and Vice-chairman of the National Democratic Committee, brought to her subject a viewpoint gained from experience in public life which greatly interested her listeners and will likewise undoubtedly be of interest to the readers of this Magazine and we are therefore pleased to print it here.—Editor's Note.

THE first message that was ever sent across a telegraph wire was eloquent with the humility and reverence of its inventor, Samuel F. B. Morse. Standing awed before the product of his own brain, he flashed across the wire from Washington to Baltimore, "What hath God wrought."

Since that time countless marvelous inventions and discoveries have been given by science to the world. They have revolutionized modern life and added immeasurably to the richness and fulness of life for every one of us and when we contemplate those benefits which we enjoy, we are moved too to say "What hath God wrought."

The motion picture, like a bright shaft of sunlight, has brightened the lives of millions of men and women and children all over the world. There never has been any form of entertainment devised by the brain of man that has made so universal an appeal to people of every race regardless of condition of life. One vast throng they constitute which through every tiresome day and nearly every waking hour may be seen wending its way through the open doors into the picture theatre, there to enjoy, to revel in the interest that awaits them. Rich and poor come together upon one common footing and the illiterate and the scholar likewise. Even the highbrow deigns to lend his presence there! Many a poor weary soul, worn with the heat and the burden of the day comes to the picture show to find rest and relaxation, for it is a place where the Old Dog Care may not invade.

Its diversified program lends interest to all. The comic picture excites the merriment of children and likewise us children of larger growth. The dramatic feature finds response in youth and in the elders too, for "all the world loves a lover." And the one seeking adventure finds a thrill there; it may be in the adventures of a Sir Galahad, or perhaps in seeing life re-enacted in our own Western plains—the attack of Indians or the feats of the Western cowboy on the wild Pegasus of the plains, the bucking broncho. The moving picture seems in its gamut of subjects to cover the whole field of human experience and to portray almost every condition in life.

Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross

The newsreel is more interesting to some of us and the only trouble with it is that it is too short. So frequently do the subjects change, and they are treated with such brevity, that often they make one think of trying to read a page of the dictionary.

There are those who are deprived of travel but upon the motion picture screen they have laid out before them the beauties of nature, the most sublime examples of God's handiwork, as well as the most splendid structures of man's hand throughout the world. They may see all the peoples of all the earth at their daily tasks and pleasures.

And there is the educational feature of the motion picture. The picture as an agency of instruction is by no means a late discovery. As early as the year 700 A. D. a famous Italian educator employed the theory that through pictures children could learn more quickly and retain knowledge longer than by spoken instruction or by reading in books; accordingly he received a commission from the city fathers of Rome to have painted upon the walls around the city whole stories in pictures and taking the children there he taught them their lessons. How eagerly would they have grasped that added advantage of voice and sound and color that we now have!

When we consider all these possibilities of the moving picture and that right now it is reaching fourteen million people a day, so I am told, in our own land alone, it is a perfectly appalling thought. The power that it wields for either good or evil in the world! To upbuild humanity or to drag it down!

The question immediately arises in our minds: Where can responsibility be fixed and how?

For the utilization of this great power as a means of instruction, as an educational agency, let me say, and a spiritual agency, manifestly that responsibility rests upon the motion picture industry and upon the people it serves as well. It is a responsibility that must be shared and which rests heavily upon both.

As much as we may praise the pictures (and they abundantly deserve it), the superior ones that are shown to us, and the manifold useful purposes that they now serve, all of us know in the back of our heads, that every day and every hour all over this land somewhere there are being paraded before our children and before the youths and their elders pictures of such character that they have neither interest nor wholesome, moral lessons to commend them and some there are that are actually pernicious in their effect.

If it is true, as I am sure it is, that such pictures as these are being shown, we well know that it is because the producers of them interpret the enormous patronage they receive as public sanction, or at least they take silence as consent.

The moving picture industry, like all other industries, operates upon the principle that is well embodied in the slogan, "We strive to please." All of the time the best business brains that are available are working to that end and fabulous sums are being expended of money and likewise of time. We know that a king's ransom is spent upon many a scenario.

The public little knows to what extent it is indebted to unselfish, public-spirited women and men who are giving freely of their time and of their effort to induce the production of pictures of superior quality.

The public service that is being rendered by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures many know. The policy of this organization, is that it is on principle opposed to censorship, federal or any other kind, but rather holds strongly to the position that best results can be obtained by educating the people to the appreciation of pictures of superior quality. I heartily agree with that policy myself and I hold that it is altogether in harmony with the institutions of democracy.

This work that the National Board of Review is so nobly doing is being carried on unselfishly and let me emphasize it, without money and without price. They are serving the public purely from interest in the progress of humanity, by reviewing all the pictures that go upon the screen and then advising producers and sending broadcast throughout the nation printed matter calling attention to such films as they find exceptionally worthy of public patronage.

This commendable public service is something in which all of us can take part. Naturally any individual among us feels that his or her personal influence is too negligible to be of great importance in dealing with a problem so stupendous as this. That may be but if right now each one of us would resolve to do our part our collective influence could move mountains.

It occurs to me that the practical way to proceed is for us all to avail ourselves of this information that the National Board of Review is broadcasting over the land, and other information that is available, to inform ourselves of the character of widely advertised pictures in order that we may make discriminating choice of those that we and that our children will patronize. In that way we can help build up and stimulate public opinion in support of better quality pictures.

Another way that occurs to me, a very practical one indeed, is to send direct to the producers of the motion pictures we find distinctly demoralizing in character a letter and with it the basis of our objection. Also, some constructive suggestions relative to future productions.

This kind of public service entails some trouble, some work, but there is no excellence, you know, without labor, and if we will do that, and I shall be one right now to pledge that I am going to try to do it in the future, we will have a rich reward in the knowledge that we have done our part, large or small as it may be, to help elevate a great permanent social force that is powerful, inasmuch as it touches every human life practically, and has a bearing upon the mental and spiritual welfare of the entire population in our own and other lands.

JEAN A. LE ROY, a photographer, following experiments begun in 1876, successfully projected motion pictures on a screen for the first time on February 5, 1894. The fifth of this month the thirty-sixth anniversary of Mr. Le Roy's achievement was celebrated. The National Board of Review anticipated this celebration a few days by passing a resolution at its Sixth Annual Conference held on January 23rd-25th which reads as follows:

WHEREAS, it is appropriate for this Conference, one of whose aims is to note outstanding accomplishments in the field of motion pictures, to give recognition to personalities as well as forces which have contributed to those accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Jean A. Le Roy, through the invention of his "Marvelous Cinematographe", first publicly demonstrated thirty-six years ago on February 5th, 1894, when a motion picture was projected on the screen, established himself among inventors as one who had made practical the motion picture projector which is a mechanical basis of the medium and art of the motion picture; and

WHEREAS, Jean A. Le Roy, personally having gained nothing through his part in the work of invention and having, as far as the public is concerned, remained largely unknown in his connection with it; and

WHEREAS, his seventy-sixth birthday occurs on February 5th, 1930; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that this Conference, in recognition of his pioneer achievement and of his importance in the field of invention as it pertains to the motion picture, takes this occasion to extend its greetings to Jean A. Le Roy on the event of his seventy-sixth birthday and to wish him that reward of fame in the history of the motion picture to which he is justly entitled.

THE probability that talking pictures will open new fields of entertainment for the deaf instead of, as has been generally supposed, depriving them of their one form of amusement in the silent drama seems almost realized. The initial step in a plan to assure this entertainment for the deaf comes in the form of an announcement that a section of the Brooklyn Paramount Theatre will be equipped with special acoustic equipment for the deaf. The equipment has been designed by the engineers of the Bell Telephone Laboratories and is being installed by Electrical Research Products, Inc., as part of a Nation-wide campaign to make the entertainment facilities of talking pictures through the Western Electric sound system available for the deaf also. The equipment consists of a Western Electric receiver with a wire headband to attach it over the ear. In the hand of the user will be a special potentiometer, shaped like a fountain pen. By pressing a button on it, the holder can regulate the volume of sound according to individual needs. Wiring at the back of each seat, to which the equipment will be attached will make the necessary connection with the sound reproducing equipment in the theatre. Government statistics disclose that there are 15,000,000 deaf people in the United States and that of these 15,000,000 afflicted with varying degrees of deafness 8,000,000 are minors. Accordingly, provision is being made for them on a small scale and the facilities will be increased if the demand becomes apparent. This was tried out recently at the tenth annual meeting of the American Federation for the Hard of Hearing in the Museum of Arts Building in Cleveland before 300 delegates from the United States and Canada.

A Social Lag in the Motion Picture

By Dr. Walter W. Pettit

Director, Department of Community Organization, New York School of Social Work; Acting Chairman, National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

ON the occasion of the recent celebration in honor of Thomas A. Edison, the New York Telegram printed an editorial which was widely copied. It pointed out the great strides in mechanical development that have been made, many of which are associated with Edison's name, as compared with the lack of progress in social conditions and relationships in which we live. The discrepancy between technological progress and the development of social institutions is evidenced on all sides. In an age of radios, autos, telephones, hundred story buildings, and aeroplanes, much of our thought, ideas and social relationships are in the period of the ox cart and the thatched hut. Family life, the gang relations of many of our children, many of our ethical ideas and practices, the Blue Laws of parts of our country, all place us as contemporaries of Thomas Jefferson, if not earlier.

In Sigrid Undset's trilogy, "Kristin Lavransdatter", there is a most interesting and detailed picture of the life and thought of Twelfth Century Norway. A large part of the interest in the book is due to the similarity of much of existence seven centuries ago with life today. Houses were extremely crude, transportation and communication of the simplest type judged by present day standards. On the other hand, the status of the church, of the state, of the marriage relation, all seem not far removed from our own experiences. The feelings of these Norwegians of seven centuries ago regarding people who were different from them are familiar to us today; right and wrong were purely relative and depended upon the relationship of the people concerned, as is likely to be true today. Practice was far from being consistent with the teachings of the church then, as now.

This failure on the part of certain phases of our civilization to develop as rapidly as certain other elements in life is evidenced everywhere. We see it in comparing country with country, city with city, parts of one city with another, and one racial group with another. Human nature, Alfred Russell Wallace, thought, had changed but little, if any, since the Egyptians. Upon this basis of a slowly changing human nature are developed our innumerable interests. Institutions ministering to human desires arise and progress with as great a variation as would a fleet of toy balloons freed at some wedding festival. Some might return to earth at the starting place, and others be waft varying distances. Schools in some places have progressed, while the church is mediaeval in its dogma and organization. In other places it may be religion which is in the fore ranks while industry or politics lag.

Dr. Walter W. Pettit

There are at least two illustrations of lag in connection with the motion picture which deserve attention. Perhaps the most obvious one, and the one which attracts the most attention is the discrepancy in progress in the

various phases of motion picture production. Several years ago Thomas Dixon in an address before this National Board of Review pointed out that in mechanical development there had been enormous progress in the comparatively few years of the motion picture, while in scenario construction and in motion picture acting little had been accomplished. We have all commented upon the inanity of the story and the acting in films in which settings and photography are beautiful, the production most lavish, and the film projected in a palatial environment.

Gilbert Seldes in "The Movies and the Talkies," a delightful and instructing essay, has discussed the progress of the motion picture technically in a paragraph which should be repeated. Writing of a period when Mary Pickford was dominating the screen with what Will Irwin has called her golden curls, a pair of soft eyes and her "unfair gift of personality," he says:

"Improvement in raw film and in the lens of the camera made the picture as it struck the eye much more attractive; with California as a playground the movie presented the loveliness of nature and with the pretty girls of the world to choose from, they set physical loveliness against this background. The films were ravished by sunlight, set gasping by canyons and precipices, enchanted by such natural shocks as storm and wind and rain and snow; it was part of their real simplicity, like love of parades, and it never left them. With a desert, a quicksand, a storm at sea, a waterfall, a treacherous rapids, they could make a picture. If a picture were otherwise feeble, they would send a railroad train over a bridge into a canyon and count themselves lucky in the cost because they felt sure of success."

The topic which I want to stress is not the lag within the industry itself, interesting and significant as it is, but rather the failure of certain phases of the world without the industry to keep up with the developments of the motion picture. The progress of the motion picture has been so great that the world at large might well quote Lewis Carroll and explain that, like Alice, it had been going as fast as it could in order to remain where it was. The efforts of most of our social institutions to understand the motion picture do not deserve much commendation.

In education we have complained of the alleged evil influence of the film on the child and have done little about it. We have studied the attendance of children at movies for the past fifteen years and longer. We know that most childrn attend the movies from once to twice a week and in some cases more frequently. The church has discussed the motion picture for many years and has usually taken a negative attitude regarding the industry while the attendance at the movie far exceeds that of the Sunday School in most cities. In a particularly well churched city in the east in which a large percentage of the population is descended from church-attending Dutch settlers, but thirty-six per cent of the boys from six to twenty-one are enrolled in the Protestant Sunday Schools. Allowing for an additional twelve per cent Roman Catholic and Jewish population there are still less than fifty per cent of the boys of this city in touch with organized religion as represented by the churches. The movie attendance of these boys averages once a week. The church in this city touches about half as many boys as the movies. Finally, in the field of private and public recreation, both for adult and adolescent, there is little effort to understand and utilize what is perhaps the greatest single influence in the leisure time field.

The school is in error in adopting a negative attitude toward so important a factor in the leisure time field as the motion picture. Over one half of a group of two hundred and twenty-three teachers and principals questioned in Chicago, reported the effects of motion pictures to be harmful "through retardation of mental powers, general interference with school work, rendering the child nervous and excitable, lowering vitality, and through tendency to have other undesirable effects." One hundred and eighty-three of this group of two hundred and twenty-three had apparently no other solution than a board of censors as a partial remedy for this situation.

The movie is with us. It is a vicarious form of recreation, but so are the radio, most forms of competitive athletics when carried on in educational institutions, the drama and many other recreational developments in our congested city life. The opportunity for creative activity is of necessity limited for many of our population, at least part of the price we pay for herding together is the necessity of taking our recreation second hand. Mean-

while the movie is with us and the teacher should recognize it and attempt to integrate it in his plan of training for leisure time activity. The school should recognize the movie for what it is, a powerful influence in adolescent life. As with other forms of recreation, an effort should be made to have the child approach the movie in a more analytical spirit than he usually does. It is an error to give a *narrow* educational content to leisure time activities. On the other hand, a game of cards does not lose its recreational value if one studies his bidding, and learns what this or that authority thinks of various leads. In fact the recreational value of the game is thereby enhanced. The same is true of football, of a symphony concert, of a painting.

The school which is alive to its job knows something of the pictures which are to be shown in the vicinity and discussions among students and between students and teachers before and after seeing pictures deepen the appreciation of students for those qualities in the movie which deserve approbation and bring perhaps some understanding of the weaknesses of the pictures in acting and in story. Quite generally schools are establishing hobby classes. A hobby class on the movie could well keep a card catalogue of the more successful actors and the pictures in which they appear. Reviews of the pictures could be clipped and an effort made to elicit from the children their own criticisms which could be filed away for future reference.

Professor Dewey's dictum that education is life is no where more evidenced than in leisure time activities. The movies are full of leads for a resourceful teacher in many different school subjects. The possibilities of motivating English by reviews and criticisms of pictures seen, by comparing scenarios with the books or plays from which they are taken, are many. A fascinating course in geography could be constructed about the news reels and the foreign setting of films. Out of *The Cock-Eyed World* one could lead a group of children through several continents, through generations of Spanish and Russian pioneering, and in addition, a number of interesting customs of these peoples could be emphasized. Some diverting episodes in the history of the United States might be explained, or at least, described, by accounting for American marines in Vladivostok and Central America.

An occasional teacher might take an excursion into individual and group psychology via the imperfect cinematograph. The somewhat obvious ways in which directors secure emotional effects, the relation of music to such effects, and the development of montage would prove instruction discussion topics when based upon pictures seen by the children.

A certain number of educational films are shown in schools. Children in large numbers, however, see the commercial films. Mrs. Alice Miller Mitchell of the Board of Censors of Chicago in her recent book "Children and Movies" found sixty-four percent of 10,052 children in Chicago attending the movies one and two times a week, nine per cent three and four times and three of every hundred children five times a week. In a group of delinquents twenty per cent attended the movies five times a week. Regardless of what the school may think of the movies, there it is, and children do attend. The school should recognize these facts and utilize the pictures as an asset in the leisure time problem, as well as an ally in the educational process.

Libraries are alive to the relationship of their work and motion pictures and stories on which motion picture scenarios are based, are made available to young and old. I have not found any story hours in libraries which have utilized current movie themes, but doubtless up and coming librarians have long since attempted this.

Churches, on the other hand, have as a whole been more conservative than school or library, in their relation to the movies. An occasional liberal church has turned its Sunday night meetings into discussions of motion pictures, and in some churches special showings of pictures are given on Sunday evenings. Too frequently ministers have condemned all pictures. A famous New York minister asserted last year that no pictures had been made which could be called artistic or which could be said to have a positive influence for good. The church, as a whole, has failed to appreciate the part recreation plays in life. Cotton Mather—Keeper of the Puritan Conscience writes in his diary:

"In passing along the street I have set myself to bless thousands of persons who never knew that I did it; with secret wishes, after this manner sent unto Heaven for them."

"Children at Play . . . Lord let not those Children always forget the Work which they came into the World upon."

At the age of twenty Cotton Mather sets apart one afternoon a week for parish visiting and organizing religious clubs for young men. Ordained May 13, 1685, prayed an hour and a quarter, preached an hour and three-quarters. Card playing, the drama and dancing have been under the ban of many religious denominations. It is not strange, therefore, that the possibilities of the movie have not been recognized by many of the churches.

A final illustration of failure to utilize the possibilities of the movie is the slight interest in special showings of exceptional films. The National Board of Review and some of its affiliated committees have given invitation showings, but the possibilities in a little motion picture theatre have been left almost entirely to commercial interests, and have been limited to a few cities. The Little Theatre movement has spread quite generally through the country. Pasadena has a beautiful little theatre, Dallas a palatial one, and other places have renovated barns, or adapted buildings constructed for other forms of entertainment. Many of these little theatres could be utilized for occasional showings of exceptional films, and the subscription lists of little theatre leagues should furnish an intelligent and interested nucleus for an exceptional photoplay league. Though there has been some discussion of some such plan, so far as I know no such development has actually occurred. With the introduction of the talkie probably the initiation of such a plan has been postponed indefinitely. The movie was coming of age when the talkie was born. Those of us who were watching the struggles of adolescence will now have to wait for another and different child to grow up, and what it will develop into is in the lap of the gods, gods one fears cast of the precious metals.

The movie goes on perfecting its technique. The story it has to tell is usually not worth the telling. The creative imagination of those responsible for scenarios lags behind the genius of the inventor. Our social institutions conservative, changing but slowly, are still further behind, protesting frequently against the intruding cinematograph, and but gradually utilizing it in their programs.

(*Continued from page 4*)

"The Conference was enjoyed and proved most interesting. I think great interest was shown in the methods of work in the smaller towns and indications of greater activities than a year ago."—Mrs. George D. Bangs, Chairman, Better Films Committee, National Life Conservation Society.

"I am still enjoying in retrospect the good time I had at the Conference."—Mrs. Alonzo Richardson, Secretary, Board of Review, Atlanta (Ga.).

"The members of our Committee who attended the Conference and Luncheon join me in sending congratulations to you upon the success of both."—Mrs. M. F. Halpin, Corresponding Secretary, Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee.

"Congratulations on a very successful National Board of Review Conference. I am sure everyone present got something helpful from the discussions of the varied activities of Better Films groups and from the very interesting addresses given by the fine speakers." —Mrs. George C. Harrison, Chairman, Committee of Motion Pictures, R. I. State Federation of Women's Clubs.

"I feel that I have been awakened, stimulated and helped in every way for my work." —Mrs. L. B. Heuermann, Chairman, Better Films Committee, Eagle Rock Chapter, D. A. R., Montclair (N. J.).

"Congratulations on your most successful Conference and Luncheon—It seems to me one of the best you have had."—Miss Elizabeth Perkins, Executive Secretary, Film Bureau.

"I have a lot of enthusiasm, due to the splendid Conference you had this year."— Mrs. Hugh A. Smith, Jr., Chairman, Better Films Committee, D. A. R., Rochester (N. Y.).

"The Conference was a great inspiration to me."—Mrs. H. W. Reeve, Rockville Center (N. Y.) Better Films Committee.

"I congratulate you on the success of your splendid Luncheon." — Miss Mary Dolan, New York City.

Exceptional Photoplays

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Frances T. Patterson
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Clarence A. Perry
Walter W. Pettit
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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

Wilton A. Barrett

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

Anna Christie

Directed by.....*Clarence Brown*
Photographed by.....*William Daniels*
Play by Eugene O'Neill

The Cast

Anna .....*Greta Garbo*
Matt .....*Charles Bickford*
Chris .....*George Marion*
Marthy .....*Marie Dressler*

THIS is one of Eugene O'Neill's best plays, and so may be counted as one of the worthier examples of modern American drama. It has been made into a motion picture once before, before the coming of sound and talk into pictures. Now it is here again on the screen, chosen, probably, as much for the fact that the heroine has a trace of the Minnesota-Swedish style of speech as for any other reason, because it is the vehicle for Greta Garbo's first talking picture. The production turns out to be exceptional for the same reason, and because of the excellent acting of the whole cast.

Frances Marion, who has been entrusted with making more important scenarios than probably any other writer for the screen, faithfully followed the text of the play, adding a few connecting scenes that are quite in key with what O'Neill wrote. The result is a very talkie, uncinematic affair, more old-fashioned than the silent movies. If it were not so well acted it would be pretty tiresome. The action goes forward by jerks, one scene of talk talk talk, followed by a fade-out and a time-elapse title, in effect just like the falling of a curtain, then more talk. That a great deal of it is good talk does not liven it up very much, nor does the obviously studio-constructed sky-line help to remove the feeling of watching something on a stage. "Dat ole davil sea" is present only in the conversation of old Chris.

But four remarkable characterizations stand out shiningly. Miss Garbo's, first of all. It is less showy acting than that of her companions—more deeply felt and more subtly expressed. Her voice is in strange and beautiful accord with the Garbo personality of the silent pictures. With it she does the same kind of creating she does with her movements and her body and her face—the creating of a woman of whom we catch eloquent and illuminating glimpses of an inner life, continually; an inner life all entangled with the world outside her, yet with inmost wells of being inevitably invisible and incommunicable. To call Garbo a "mystery" is merely to pin once more upon her the stock label of the fan magazines. But she has more than any other actress on the screen the power of suggestion, in infinite degrees, the isolated mysteriousness of the human soul.

The part of Anna Christie does not at all tax her acting prowess. She makes of the barge-man's daughter a girl of somewhat finer strain, perhaps, than the play presented, one whose miseries come a little more from the spirit and a little less from the nerves. But in that she has added to O'Neill, rather than falsified him.

The Irish sailor, too, is better than he was in the play. Whether it is because some of his talk has been abbreviated, or because Charles Bickford makes him more real, he

seems more an actual Irish seaman than the rather obvious imitation of Singe that O'Neill set down upon paper.

George Marion seems destined to be old Chris in all his incarnations—on the stage and twice on the screen he has acted the part. It is the same performance, and there is nothing but itself to compare it with. It is as good as ever. Marthy Owen has been built up somewhat by the scenarist, and even more by Marie Dressler, who has put an infinite amount of careful detail into the characterization. Sometimes it seems as if there were going to be too much, an over-doing, but the gusto and vitality of the actress always saves it just as it is hovering on the brink of exaggeration.

Produced and distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation.

Street of Chance

Directed by .....John Cromwell
Photographed by .....Charles Lang
Story by O. H. P. Garrett

The Cast

John B. Marsden .....William Powell
Judith Marsden .....Jean Arthur
Alma Marsden .....Kay Francis
"Babe" Marsden .....Regis Toomey

THE lament, off and on, has been loud among intelligent picture goers that the films lack the quality of real life, that they persist in the fairy tale version, that they do not follow the course of the inevitable, that they avoid, at no matter how great a cost of reality, the ending that the course of events would otherwise make unhappy. And the truth is that these criticisms are more or less well founded. But now and then the American film does something that is totally at variance with the general practice in providing entertainment for the masses. *Underworld* was such a picture. *The Street of Chance* is even a better case in point.

This story of a gambler, gradually penned in by circumstance against the possibility of escape, the doorway closed at the last moment, is as near to the classic conception of tragedy as any film has come. To say that its entertainment quality has suffered as a consequence would only show a complete lack of understanding of what constitutes entertainment—if entertainment comprisees interest at every point on the part of the spectators through vital dramatic movement, suspense, and the participation of the audience in what the characters feel and think as the fate ordained approaches.

The material of *The Street of Chance* is living. Its life is that of a certain adventurous class living always close to tense drama and what may turn out to be disastrous. Our society, perhaps more than any, is characterized by the "racket". This film is therefore an insight down a dark groove where most of us do not walk but which runs parallel with our steps, and we are forced by the picture's unrelenting grasp on our interest to acknowledge its authenticity.

On the artistic side, it has much to commend it. Nothing is omitted that is necessary for its dramatic action, and nothing is added that is unnecessary. It is done with the utmost economy and yet no telling detail is missed. As a piece of scenario writing it is a masterpiece, carefully and thrillingly directed.

William Powell, as the cool and successful gambler, who tries to break the net that his profession has woven and finds its strands too strong, gives one of his best screen portrayals, and the others of the cast almost without exception are convincing. There is not one moment in the picture that is not plausible. It is this quality that contributes, as much as any, to making it all so exciting. One need not go outside of life for the material of the screen both as art and entertainment.

All and all *The Street of Chance* is among the very best things to date that has come to the audible screen.

Produced and distributed by Paramount.

WILL DAY'S wonderful collection of cinematograph apparatus in London, is to be sold by auction. Many of the items of this collection, which has taken Mr. Day 30 years to amass, are now almost priceless. It includes the very first film ever shot, and a number of specimens that cannot be duplicated in the world. It is an absolutely unique record of the search for motion pictures, and the earliest piece is a box of Chinese figures used for the shadow shows in the early centuries of the Christian era. The world has been searched for any and every object having any relation to the development of motion pictures from the earliest conception of the idea.

BETTER FILMS FORUM

EDITOR: BETTINA GUNCZY

Department of the Better Films National Council

Community Wide Better Films Work

A MOTION Picture Study Club which originated as a part of a true study program is The Motion Picture Study Club of Oneonta, New York. It was created early in January, 1928, out of the interest of the Child Conservation League, a group which under the able leadership of Mrs. Ray D. Champlin had conducted study groups regarding many phases of child welfare. The better films committee of that organization saw the need of a Community Committee and following an investigation of the National Board of Review's Study Club Plan invited representatives of all organizations in the city to take part in such a local group.

That this idea met with a hearty response and success can best be told by quoting from a report made following the recent visit of Professor Leroy E. Bowman and Mr. Wilton A. Barrett, of the National Board to the Oneonta Club for its annual banquet. " 'The motion picture should be utilized rather than criticised, as a part of the educational scheme,' said Professor Leroy E. Bowman, of the Department of Sociology, Columbia University, during the banquet of the Motion Picture Study Club here. Professor Bowman was one of the principal speakers of the evening. One hundred and fifty people were present in the hall of the First Methodist Episcopal Church where the affair took place. Dr. George Dann, superintendent of the city schools, presided at the request of Mrs. Frank Shutts of the Board of Education, chairman of the club. Dr. Dann gave a brief history of the formation of the Oneonta Motion Picture Study Club. He brought out that the club was started by a group of five women, of which Mrs. Wheeler Brannaman was chairman. The Study Club has grown into a group of 26 members representing 20 organizations in the civic life of Oneonta. In describing the purposes of the Study Club, Dr. Dann said, 'Among these is the aim of bringing to the community, through a process of selection, based upon information furnished by the National Board of Review, an unpaid, volunteer socially minded citizen body, with headquarters in New York City, whose reviewers see all of the motion picture entertainment product before it is released to the public, notice of the best films exhibited in Oneonta. 'The idea,' said Dr. Dann, 'embraces the further aim of awakening the public consciousness to the finest values to be found in motion picture entertainment, together with a means by which that consciousness can be registered.' He congratulated the Motion Picture Study Club on the interest its work was arousing and suggested that through it the community could find a way of making its preferences in motion picture entertainment effective, in friendly cooperation with the local theatre managers.

Following Dr. Dann, Mr. Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary of the National Board of Review, was introduced. Mr. Barrett brought out that the National Board regarded the motion picture not as an entertainment medium exclusively, but as a potential instrument awaiting needed development for use in the field of education. He said, 'The motion picture is more than a passing show in a theatre. Important as its function is in that respect a motion picture should also be regarded as a force to be made permanent in the class room and elsewhere where the work of bringing culture and instruction is being undertaken. The importance of the motion picture's development and best uses in this sense cannot be overlooked by socially minded people. The opportunities of the motion picture study club to perform this service lies in its ability to stimulate community interests in bringing films to serve the civic need.'

Professor Bowman in a forceful philosophic talk on conditions of society today as they are related to the school and the home explained the tendency associated with the

motion picture. He said, 'Education is a matter of leading out from an interest. Children and adults are vastly interested in motion pictures—so motion pictures should be utilized rather than criticized as a part of many educational schemes. Enormous systems are being developed to take care of each new invention and the motion picture is creating as fundamental a change in our social life as is the motor. We are beginning to realize that leisure time is not useless time and leisure time spent with the motion picture should be so utilized as to furnish a key measure of constructive social life, because it is an instrument of interest. We should begin with the interest of the individual in that thing which is at hand. Along with this we should work out new national standards of conduct and judgment in order to apply that interest to the best social advantage. This can be made to result from cooperative efforts of communities with other social minded groups who are studying the best developments and uses of the motion picture as an educational as well as recreational medium. There was a good response to the speeches of Mr. Barrett and Professor Bowman and many questions were asked concerning the work of the local group."

Professor Bowman and Mr. Barrett while in Oneonta also spoke at Hartwick College, the High School, the State Normal and at a Rotary Club Luncheon to enthusiastic audiences.

THE Rockville Centre (N. Y.) Better Films Committee has been instrumental in arousing interest in better films in many ways. A recent meeting of the Fortnightly Club of that city was devoted to the subject of motion pictures. A number of members of the Better Films Committee are also members of the Fortnightly and they took this opportunity to bring to the larger group the important matter of gaining attention and support for the worthy films. Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary of the National Board of Review, of which organization this Committee is an affiliated member, was the speaker. Especial use of films in the schools and the assured patronage of the best in the theatre is interesting this Committee. Plans are now being made for supporting the picture *The First Flight of the Graf Zeppelin.*

THE Westwood Better Films Committee, sponsored by the Woman's Club of Westwood, New Jersey, and recently organized with Mrs. William C. Carter as chairman, is the newest affiliated Committee of the Better Films National Council of the National Board. It is with sincere pleasure that we welcome this Committee for we believe that it will indeed become an extremely active one. It can boast of twenty-one charter members and a corps of enthusiastic officers, a number of whom were in attendance at the Conference of the National Board in January. Mrs. Walter C. Kaufman, president of the Woman's Club of Westwood, widely known as one of the most active and progressive of the women's clubs of Northern New Jersey, is a member of the Better Films Committee and is lending helpful support. This committee has already done considerable work and held an open night recently to which the public was invited. Mr. Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary of the National Board of Review, addressed the meeting and the objects and aims of the committee were explained. The program for the evening was in charge of the Reverend William Barton Kelly.

THE movie we have always with us to fill every need and here is where it supplies the subject for an interesting editorial. We might add a well deserved one, too, for Mrs. Barsham's fine work in Delaware is worthy of comment. It reads in part as follows: "This is Drama Week and as we have nothing of interest on the legitimate stage perhaps something general and local on the "Movies" might not be amiss. The National Board of Review says this has been a year worth noting in motion picture developments, nearly everyone feels like talking it over. When the movies first came into being they were unsteady, flickering, coarse in sentiment and action and crude in mechanics. Time passed and improvements were noted. They were inexpensive entertainment and their popularity grew by leaps and bounds. When women began to realize that the "movies" had come to stay, that they were fast taking their place in the life of the community, they began to find it necessary to take a hand in the game. As usual they turned to their organization for the concerted strength so necessary when

real work is to be done. The result was the appointment of motion picture committees in local, state and national organizations of women. The Federated clubs have not worked single handed to bring about the showing of good pictures. Other organizations have likewise taken a hand and shown their interest and given their support. The Delaware State Federation added a department of motion pictures to its list and made Mrs. Edmund M. Barsham its chairman. Mrs. Barsham has worked hard to educate the state for better films. She has asked for a motion picture committee in each federated club; she has gone outside the federated clubs and interested other organizations in the work; she has made contacts either personally or otherwise, with every federated club in the state; since the beginning of the club year she has filled seventeen speaking engagements and edited copy each week for three Wilmington dailies and one Dover paper. These reviews are really helpful for they are classified reviews and are of pictures which are actually shown the next week."

THE MARCH OF THE MOVIES, the historical film compilation of the National Board of Review, was loaned to Mrs. George C. Harrison, Chairman, Committee on Motion Pictures, Rhode Island State Federation of Women's Clubs, in the interest of her motion picture work. She has sent us the following report regarding the showings. "Our first showing of *The March of the Movies* was given in the large recreation hall of the Central Baptist Church of Providence on January 20th, 1930. We had a most enthusiastic audience of over two hundred. I preceded the showing with an introduction. The second showing was given in the fine auditorium of the Providence Plantation Club following a supper at which two hundred and fifty were present. I explained as on the previous occasion our unusual interest in the National Board of Review because no picture is allowed to be shown in the city of Providence unless it is passed by the Board. The picture was again enthusiastically received and I was asked if it would be possible to have other showings. I explained how fortunate we were to have these and I thank the Board for *The March of the Movies.* The motion picture work in Rhode Island is progressing. I continue the broadcasting twice each month and send out fifty-five bulletins each week. These bulletins give the weekly change of pictures at our six first-run houses in Providence. After pictures are shown at our first-run houses they are released for the state so those interested can note the recommended films given through the broadcastings and bulletins and see them when most convenient. The bulletins are sent to club motion picture chairmen, some public libraries and various organizations having club headquarters and bulletin boards for posting. They also go to the ten state chairmen of the ten organizations forming the Better Films Council of Rhode Island. The Council chairmen keep their organizations interested by use of the bulletin recommendations and in various other ways. The Council activities do not interfere with any separate work carried on by a member of the Council group, for instance, the P. T. A. have their own junior showings and the Girl Scouts are planning wide activities.

"VOTING for the Talking and the Silent Pictures" is the way in which Mrs. George D. Bangs, Chairman of Films of the National Life Conservation Society, heads the following item indicating the Society's interest in the sound versus the silent in pictures. "Answering the call of the Universal Studio appearing in a copy of the Saturday Evening Post for a vote on the silent and talking films, the National Life Conservation Society of which Mrs. Charles C. Marshall of New York City, is President, took a vote at their annual luncheon in November. It was interesting to note how very close were the results. The vote for the talking picture—39 per cent and the vote for the silent picture—35 per cent. This is only one society but it shows that although the talking picture is growing in favor, especially with the improved production, the close number of votes for the silent films indicates that they should not be abandoned. The public want and enjoy them." In the few months that have elapsed since this November vote the "talkies" have made even further advancement so we hope to have the opportunity to present another vote at a later date to record any possible results of changing opinion due to this advancement.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

FRANCES C. BARRETT
HELEN CAHILL

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience *Pictures recommended for the family audience (12 years up).*

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience (18 years up).*

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays".*

NOTE—Beginning with this issue the audience classification of pictures has been changed to the family audience and the mature audience taking the place of the three former classifications. Please let us know if you find this more helpful.—*The Editor.*

Burning Up

Directed by.....A. Edward Sutherland
Featuring.....Mary Brian, Richard Arlen

Screen story by William McNutt and Grover Jones

LOU, who drives in an amusement park, is ambitious to be a race track driver. He is booked by two crooks to throw a race at the county fair but when he learns that the father of the girl he loves has a lot of money up on him he refuses and the man he is racing tells him he will run him off the track. An exciting race ensues with the usual accident but all comes out for the best and he finds victory and the girl waiting for him.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—6 reels)

Chasing Rainbows

Directed by.....Charles F. Rizner
Featuring.....Bessie Love

Screen story by Bess Meredith

ANOTHER romance of show life with several good musical numbers. In love with her dancing partner, a girl unhappily watches him fall in and out of love many times. Only after numerous experiences does he learn the meaning of true love and she learns that "all comes to him who waits." An entertaining picture for the adults.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

*Devil May Care

Directed by.....Sydney Franklin
Featuring.....Ramon Novarro

French play "The Battle of the Ladies" by Eugene Scribe and Ernest Legouve

AN unusually interesting and well done costume drama. When Napoleon is banished to the Island of Elba, one daring young man, much loved by the Emperor, escapes death by a clever ruse, and makes his way to his cousin's place in southern France. While enroute he is forced to enter a house to escape from Royalist soldiers where he encounters a young girl and when she learns he is a follower of Napoleon she attempts to turn him over to the soldiers but he again makes his escape. Later at his cousin's, disguised as a butler, he again meets the girl who betrayed him. After many escapades life resumes its even tenor when Napoleon returns and the girl decides in spite of his adherence to the Little Corporal she does love the boy.

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

The Girl of the Port

Directed by.....*Bert Glennon*
Featuring.....*Sally O'Neil*, *Reginald Sharland*

Novel "The Fire Walker" by John Russell

WHY an American chorus girl should pick a dirty port in the Fiji Islands to live in is not explained, but such is the situation in this picture. Of course, she is a fine, noble-hearted girl, a bit too full of chatter and wisecracks—Sally O'Neil is attractive and amusing in the part—and she immediately sets to work to save a young Englishman who is drinking himself to death in the cabaret where she lands a job. He was instilled with a dread of fire during the war which he cannot overcome and has taken this means of ending his existence. Ignoring gossip, the girl takes him to her own cabin and helps him regain his manhood. The experiment is successful and all ends happily.

For the mature audience.

(RKO—8 reels)

The Grand Parade

Directed by.....*Edmund Goulding*
Featuring.....*Helen Twelvetrees*, *Fred Scott*

Screen story by Edmund Goulding

THE plot of this film is the old one of a minstrel man kept on the straight and narrow path by his devoted wife. But the melodious voice of Fred Scott and the charming personality of Helen Twelvetrees make it a very interesting picture. The career of a popular minstrel show star is almost wrecked by a heartless woman but the little slavey working in the boarding house where he lives encourages him to try again. He later marries her and she travels with the show helping him continually by her love and understanding, although at times he resents her watchfulness. However, when the other woman comes into his life again and he yields to her power over him, the little wife can stand no more. But the realization that she is leaving him brings him back to his senses and the marriage goes happily on.

For the mature audience.

(Pathe—8 reels)

The Great Divide

Directed by.....*Reginald Barker*
Featuring.....*Dorothy Mackaill*, *Ian Keith*

Play by William Vaughn Moody

A YOUNG Westerner left with a girl on his hands to bring up sends her East to school. Later he meets and falls in love with a girl but does not learn her name. Annoyed with the way she is trifling with his affections, he pretends to be a bad Mexican bandit and kidnaps her, treating her to some Western hardships. In the meantime the girl has come to care for her stern protector and it is to their mutual satisfaction when they learn their real identity.

For the family audience.

(First National—8 reels)

Happy Days

Directed by.....*Benjamin Stoloff*
Featuring.....*Special Cast*

Screen story by Sidney Landfield

HAPPY DAYS is a glorified minstrel show which seems to have collected all the celebrities on the Fox roll call. An old-fashioned Southern colonel is determined to stick to his show boat although the finances are exhausted so the heroine of the plot enters a theatrical club and pleads for help and gets astonishing results. Among those who answer her entreaty are Janet Gaynor, Charles Farrell, Will Rogers, Ann Pennington, Victor McLaglen, Edmund Lowe, Farrell McDonald and numerous others. The musical numbers are very good, the settings gorgeous, and for all around entertainment this picture is excellent.

For the family audience.

(Fox—8 reels)

Harmony at Home

Directed by.....*Hamilton McFadden*
Featuring.....*Marguerite Churchill*, *William Collier, Jr.*

Play "The Family Upstairs" by Harry Delf

UNHAPPY at home and afraid to have boys come to see her since her mother figuratively throws her into their arms, a

young girls leads a stay-at-home existence until one night she meets a young man at a concert. They soon become great friends and are happy while they meet outside her home but as soon as he comes to the house scenes develop just as she feared. However her father takes matters into his own hands and everything ends well. There are many touches of good comedy in this picture concerning their family life.

For the family audience.

(Fox—7 reels)

Hell Harbor

Directed by.....*Henry King*
Featuring.....*Lupe Velez*
Novel "Out of the Night" by Rita Johnson Young

ALTHOUGH the story is trite *Hell Harbor* abounds in pictorial beauty. A girl living on an island in the South Seas, is sold by her father to a wealthy but elderly man of the island. Longing for romance, the girl rebels and when a young trader comes she goes to his boat and begs him to take her away but he sends her back to shore. Her fiance is killed and her half-demented father locks her in a tower but the boy saves her and realizing that he loves her takes her away.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—10 reels)

Hit the Deck

Directed by.....*Luther Reed*
Featuring.....*Jack Oakie*
Musical comedy by Vincent Youmans

THE musical comedy which enjoyed such a long run on Broadway and much success on the road has come to the screen with its many peppy dance numbers. Lulu serves coffee to the nephews of Uncle Sam when on shore leave. She meets one Smith who flirts with her and leaves but she has fallen in love with him so when the ship comes in again she plans a ball with the aid of one of the officers and invites all the sailors named "Smith." Among the hundreds of Smiths who arrive at the ball she at last finds the right one.

For the family audience.

(RKO—12 reels)

In the Next Room

Directed by.....*Alan Dwan*
Featuring.....*Jack Mulhall*
Novel by Eleanor Belmont and Harriet Ford

THE police are mysteriously called to a house where an old antique collector and his lovely daughter live. A beautiful old cabinet had been delivered to the house that day and in it was found a woman in a trance. During the night a man is murdered and many creepy and eerie noises are heard. A young newspaper reporter however clears up the mystery.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

The Love Racket

Directed by.....*William Seiter*
Featuring.....*Dorothy Mackaill*
Play "The Woman on the Jury" by Bernard K. Burns

AN interesting murder story. A young girl and her fiance are both on the jury to try a girl for the murder of the father of her child. As the case develops the girl on the jury discovers that the murdered man is the same who had betrayed her. Unwilling to let her fiance know the truth she tries to sway the jury without telling her reasons but unable to accomplish this she confesses her part in the man's life, proving the type he was. The jury hand in a verdict of "not guilty" and all declare the proceedings in the jury room will always be kept a secret.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

Lummox

Directed by.....*Herbert Brennon*
Featuring.....*Winifred Westover*
Novel by Fannie Hurst

IT must have been a difficult task to find an actress who could give a convincing characterization of the "Lummox" of Fannie Hurst's novel, but Winifred Westover succeeds admirably in making Bertha very real and believable. A life full of hardship and toil is the lot of this Swedish servant girl for which she is well fitted with the great strength of her large, plodding body. Pathetically in-

articulate, she nevertheless always tries to do what she can to help others as she goes from situation to situation. The tragedy of her life is her separation from her child when he is adopted at birth by a wealthy couple but she is happy in the knowledge that he is growing into something fine and noble. It is an excellent film, preserving well the atmosphere of sordidness and tragedy which distinguishes the novel.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—9 reels)

The Melody Man

Directed by.....*R. William Neill*
Featuring.....*William Collier, Jr.*, *Alice Day*

Play by Fields, Rogers and Hart

A VERY nice little picture full of music, both classical and jazz. A famous Austrian composer, forced to spend his life in obscurity with his daughter to escape punishment for the murder of his wife and her lover, finally settles in New York. Although the girl loves the old masters of music, she cannot agree with her father in his hatred of jazz. Becoming acquainted with a young jazz band leader, she offers to help him and together they work out a jazz symphony of the lovely music her father had long ago composed. On the night the symphony is played to an enthusiastic audience, the young leader introduces the old man as the composer of the original piece. In the audience, however, two Austrian officials recognize him and he leaves New York with them, contented in the knowledge that his daughter has found happiness.

For the family audience.

(Columbia—7 reels)

Men Are Like That

Directed by.....*Frank Tuttle*
Featuring.....*Hal Skelly*

Play "The Show Off" by George Kelly

THE stage success "The Show Off" comes to the screen in an entertaining picture with plenty of laughts. A blustering show-off but kind at heart, falls in love with a girl who marries him much against her family's wishes. He can never succeed in making any money and he is constantly getting himself and other people into trouble. Finally he does create quite a sensation by doing the right thing, entirely by accident, and thereby gains the family's approval for the time being although his wife insists he has always been wonderful.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—7 reels)

Mexicali Rose

Directed by.....*Earle C. Kenton*
Featuring.....*Barbara Stanwick*, *Sam Hardy*

Story by Gladys Lehman

MEXICALI ROSE, married to a wealthy owner of a gambling house in Mexico, carries on a violent flirtation with a man employed by her husband. Returning unexpectedly from one of his trips, the husband's suspicions are aroused and he plays a clever trick in order to make her confess. He divorces her and to get revenge she goes to California and traps his younger brother into marrying her, returning to her former home with her young husband. The gambler devoted to his brother, has kept from him all knowledge of the gambling house, describing it always as a mine. He tries to prove to the boy that Rose is untrue to him without telling him that she is his divorced wife. It is only when tragedy intervenes that the gambler is once more happy.

For the mature audience.

(Columbia—7 reels)

Murder on the Roof

Directed by.....*George B. Seitz*
Featuring.....*Dorothy Revier*, *Raymond Hatton*

Story by Edward Doherty

AN owner of a night club kills a man in order to obtain possession of a valuable diamond, which he intends to give to his latest dancer not knowing that she is there to get information also concerning the diamond. A jealous ex-sweetheart of the night club owner is a witness to the crime and when the owner is arrested, the young girl is cleared of all suspicion when she explains her real position at the club.

For the mature audience.

(Columbia—6 reels)

New York Nights

Directed by.....*Lewis Milestone*
Featuring.....*Norma Talmadge*
Novel "Tin Pan Alley" by Hugh Strange

NORMA TALMADGE does excellent work in her first talking picture. A young girl who is very much in love with her song writer husband, after many attempts at trying to keep him from drinking decides she must leave him. The producer of the show she is in is most attentive despite all her rebuffs and when the young couple decide to go away together and start life anew he plans to part them most effectively only to have his plan go astray and to find himself in the hands of the police.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—9 reels)

Parade of the West

Directed by.....*Harry J. Brown*
Featuring.....*Ken Maynard*
Screen story by Bennett Cohen

BUD and his little pal, Billy, are traveling with a medicine show when unexpectedly they have a chance to join a wild west show provided Bud can ride the horse, "Killer," who no one has been able to ride. He does so but is nearly killed and loses his nerve. Not wanting Billy to know the real reason he pretends to have injured his leg and leaves the show but later circumstances bring him back and he proves that he is not a coward. Ken Maynard with his Western twang sings some very pleasing songs but the picture would not be complete without his beautiful horse, "Tarzan."

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Universal—8 reels)

Roadhouse Nights

Directed by.....*Hobart Henley*
Featuring.....*Helen Morgan*, *Charles Ruggles*
Screen story by Ben Hecht

SENT to a small town to get a story about rum-running a Chicago newspaper man mysteriously disappears. His pal, excellently played by Charles Ruggles, is sent to find him and in a roadhouse, headquarters for the gang, finds a boyhood sweetheart. She is the hostess of the roadhouse and an unwilling aid to the rum-runners. With her help he learns that the other reporter has been murdered and succeeds in getting help from his home office just in time to save them from the hands of the criminals. Helen Morgan, in her famous plaintive voice, puts over some of her characteristic songs.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—7 reels)

She Couldn't Say No

Directed by.....*Lloyd Bacon*
Featuring.....*Winnie Lightner*
Play by Benjamin M. Kaye

THE story of a woman's love in which the clever Miss Lightner plays the part of a singer in a night club who falls in love with a racketeer. He promises to keep on the straight and narrow but becomes infatuated with a wealthy girl who comes to the club and goes back to his old occupation to provide her with costly presents. Broken-hearted the entertainer leaves the club and enters a show and on the night she learns that the racketeer is backing her show she is called to his bedside. Before he dies he tells her of his love for her and she promises to "carry on".

For the mature audience.

(Warner—7 reels)

Son of the Gods

Directed by.....*Frank Lloyd*
Featuring.....*Richard Barthelmess*
Novel by Rex Beach

TOLERATED in college for only what his money can buy, the son of a wealthy Chinese merchant leaves to travel in foreign lands. While on the Riviera, Sam falls in love with a beautiful and wealthy American girl who announces her belief that racial differences do not matter and he is happy in his love for her. However when she discovers that he is Chinese she forgets her theory since it touches her, thus entirely breaking the boy's spirit. He is recalled to America on account of the serious illness of his father and swears to him that he will have no mercy on Americans. Later the girl learns that love can bridge the chasm of racial differences only to

find that the boy was an adopted son of the merchant.

For the family audience.

(First National—9 reels)

Wedding Rings

Directed by.....*William Beaudine*
Featuring.....*Lois Wilson*, *H. B. Warner*

Novel "The Dark Swan" by Ernest Pascal

FORCED to step aside and see her more attractive younger sister fascinate all her friends, a girl meets a man whom she loves very much and is determined not to let her sister interfere this time but she does and they are married. Later, however, the wife proves herself most unworthy and happiness at last comes to the elder sister.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

Wide Open

Directed by.....*Archie Mayo*
Featuring.....*Edward Everett Horton*

Novel by Edward Bateman Morris

MUCH disturbed at a young girl entering his house at night, a woman-hater is further annoyed when he has to pose as the girl's husband to save their reputation. The girl succeeds in obtaining some papers which prove that he has been framed and he decides that a wife is not so bad after all.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—7 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

Anna Christie

(See page 12)

Mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

The Street of Chance

(See page 13)

Mature audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Men Without Women will be reviewed in the Exceptional Photoplays Department of the next issue of the magazine.

NON-FEATURES

The Alibi

(Vitaphone No. 2677-8)

A skit.

Family audience.

(Warner—2 reels)

Bows and Arrows

(Sportlight Series)

Philip Rounsville gives a lesson in archery.

Family audience. Juniors' matinees.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Breath of Life—Respiration

Illustrated lecture on the heart action and the life blood.

Family audience.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Carolina Capers

(Sportlight Series)

The Carolina darkies play polo with brooms, go 'possum hunting and sing spirituals. Very entertaining.

Family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Castles of Paper—Hornets

Illustrated lecture on the habits of the paper making hornets.

Family audience. Juniors' matinees.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Happy Golf

(Sportlight Series)

Alex Morrison at Pinehurst showing the correct way to play golf.

Family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Irish Fantasy

Very interesting picture containing some interesting folk lore, a wedding, war shots, and good singing.

Family audience.

(United Artists—1 reel)

Kings of the Air—Eagles

Illustrated lecture on the habits of the golden eagle.

Family audience.

(Ufa—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review Nos. 1-5
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Pathe Review Nos. 1-3
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Poisoned Daggers—The Mosquito
Illustrated lecture showing the diseases caused by the mosquito.
For the family audience.
(Ufa—1 reel)

MUSICAL SUBJECTS

The Barber Shop Chord
(Vitaphone No. 3640)
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Bedelia
For the family audience.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Barnes and Allen
(Vitaphone No. 891)
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Biltmore Trio
(Movietone No. A-90)
For the family audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Charles Hackett
(Vitaphone Nos. 890-899-900)
Operatic selections.
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel each)

Clifford and Marion
(Vitaphone No. 883)
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Clyde Doerr
(Movietone No. A-91)
For the family audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Codee and Orth
(Vitaphone No. 885)
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Coletta Ryan and Duke Yellman
(Vitaphone No. 874)
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Earl and Bell
(Movietone No. A-94)
For the family audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Eric Zardo and Guida Ciccolini
(Vitaphone No. 876)
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Marie Kurenko
(Movietone No. A-100)
For the family audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Tita Ruffo
(Movietone No. A-93)
For the family audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Roger Williams
(Vitaphone No. 882)
Moments of mimicry.
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Kisses and Kurses
(Oswald Cartoon)
The Lucky Rabbit in a very funny burlesque on "Show Boat".
For the family audience.
(Universal—1 reel)

Night Owls
Comedy of two men who break into a house so a policeman can arrest them and thereby keep his post.
For the family audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Oh, Sarah!
(Vitaphone No. 946)
Jack McLallen in a comedy skit.
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

MAR 31 19..

Vol. V, No. 3 March, 1930

A Scene from "Men Without Women" (*see page* 8)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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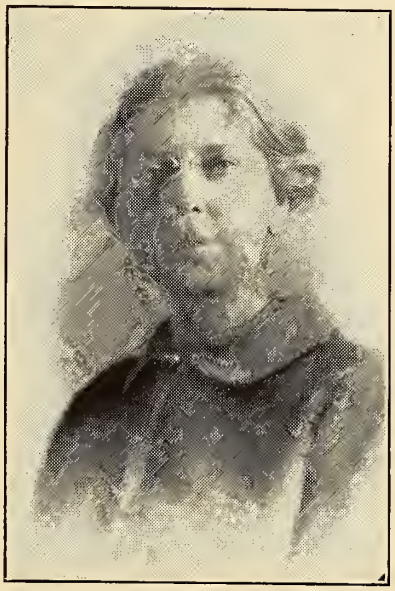
Volume V, Number 3 March, 1930 20c a copy, $2.00 a year

We Present Mrs. Price

OUR Who's Who introduces this month to the magazine readers the lone woman member of the Executive Committee of the National Board of Review, Mrs. Miriam Sutro Price. Mrs. Price has long been a staunch and loyal supporter of the National Board, having been associated with it from its beginning in 1909, and it is with much pleasure that we present this brief resumé of her many activities.

The Public Education Association, an organization of citizens interested in the public schools, has had Mrs. Price's interest since 1895. As president she served this association for four years and has been chairman of its Executive Committee for nineteen years. She was a member of the original Board of Administration of the Manhattan Trade School for Girls which ran the school for ten years until the Board of Education assimilated it as part of its system and since that time the Board, of which she is still a member, has accomplished certain things for the school which the city cannot do. This school is now called the Manhattan Industrial High School for Girls.



Mrs. Miriam Sutro Price

The Board of Governors of the Ethical Culture Schools has claimed Mrs. Price for almost thirty years. From these affiliations one can easily see Mrs. Price's great interest along educational lines and can appreciate the valuable aid she is to the National Board of Review as more and more the public is beginning to realize the important part the motion picture plays in education.

Quoting from an article published a few years ago concerning Mrs. Price's relationship with the National Board one reads, "Mrs. Miriam Sutro Price has had such long experience reviewing motion pictures that in her has developed to a high degree that spirit of tolerance and fairmindedness which is so essential for harmonious committee work in arriving at balanced decisions. She recognizes that anyone's judgment may at times be individualistic and so yields graciously to the majority verdict. She is the ideal reviewer." At the time Mrs. Price first became connected with this work, over twenty years ago, she was one of the original twelve representatives of the special motion picture

(*Continued on page* 7)

Censorship Censured

By the Hon. Franklin W. Fort
House of Representatives, United States Congress

It was a great pleasure to have on the program at our Fifteenth Annual Luncheon Mr. Franklin W. Fort who represents the 9th New Jersey District in the House of Representatives, coming as he does from a state in which there is so much active interest in motion pictures and we are happy to present to our readers his words regarding motion picture regulation which agree so heartily with the National Board's theory of "Selection—Not Censorship — the Solution." — Editor's Note.

The Hon. Franklin W. Fort

MODERN thought unfortunately is too much controlled by headlines in the press. The sub-title of the moving picture occupies very much the same position. But in the utilization of the picture, we have the practical assurance that they who read the sub-title will see the rest of the story, and consequently, the moving picture through both sub-title and story as shown has in it the possibility of greater real education and public value than has the headline in the newspaper which generally misinforms as to the content of the article and alone is looked at.

Consequently it is of genuine importance to the nation that that form of educational work, that that form of dissemination of public information of one type or another should be properly edited in order to make it certain that it gives true information and not misinformation, in order to make it certain that the lessons which it teaches are lessons which should be learned, rather than as is so often the case, lessons that are better left unlearned.

However, it is not in consonance with the ideals of this nation that censorship of any kind over the thoughts of men shall be exercised. Restrictive legislation must not relate to thought, but only to those things which have economic bearings. Consequently, it is not likely that this nation will ever adopt in any general or binding form the policy of censorship of the written or the spoken word or of the picture itself.

It is, however, imperative, if we are to preserve the real value that lies in the medium of education which the picture affords, that it should be supervised by some type of authoritative body. The type of body which as I understand it this Board is and represents is one whose action differs from censorship in that it is an act of approval rather than of blacklisting. The blacklist is un-American. The holding out of any picture, of any book, of any writing, or of any speech as worthwhile is highly American. Just so far as this fine volunteer organization performs the service of protecting the lessons to be taught by the picture by giving its approval and thereby renders the lines certain that he who learns may read between what is worthwhile and what is worthless—just so far as this body performs that function it contributes a service of genuine and lasting value to the American people.

Anti-Social Attitudes and the Motion Pictures

By Dr. Joseph L. Holmes

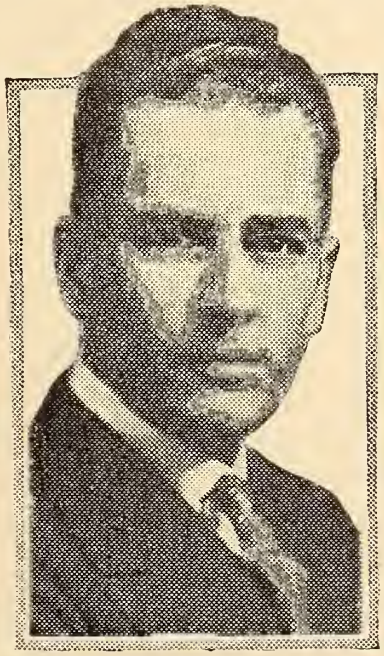
Department of Psychology, Columbia University

It was a matter of gratification to us to present Dr. Holmes as a speaker at our recent Annual Conference and this gratification has been heightened by the number of inquiries which have been received from the Conference delegates and others for copies of Dr. Holmes' address. We are therefore pleased to reprint it here.—Editor's Note.

IT is fully twenty years ago that the charge was first made by one who had attempted to determine the facts that motion pictures were a cause of crime. That investigation dealt chiefly with the effect of newspaper methods and the statements about the pictures were based on the unsupported opinions of people who had had some experience with offenders in institutions.

Since that time the same charge has been made against the pictures many times, and usually without any basis in fact. And yet there is some common sense in suspecting the pictures. Everyone knows the effect of reading matter on children. Society is so sure of what the effect is of reading matter that it has established many safeguards, both legal and extra-legal to insure that certain matter shall and that other matter shall not be allowed into the hands of children. It is by means of the spoken and written word that we acquire our habits and attitudes that we call character. Of course our earliest training is received by associating with other people but soon in childhood the spoken word comes to be the most potent stimulus in determining conduct. Language furnishes a sort of shorthand, a system of signs to which we react. Words are symbols for behavior. The pictures, on the other hand, furnish a technique which is far more potent than printed books for influencing behavior. Not every one has the ability to comprehend all the implications of the printed page but the pictures, made as they are for those of the most mediocre intelligence are understandable to everyone.

Until recently psychologists were engaged in making long lists of instincts, inherited ways of reacting. After long years of research a Russian, Pavlof, gave to the psychologists the clue to the mechanism of learning. Not in original human nature are to be found the sources of our social traits, desirable or undesirable but in our experience. The mechanism is known as conditioning which is a broad term to denote all kinds of learning. When the psychologist describes the mechanism of conditioning and attempts to apply it to social affairs he is talking about something that every intelligent person who seeks to better human behavior already knows, at least vaguely. Take for example the Boy Scout. Socially minded people have built for him a situation that will instill correct habits, ways



Dr. Joseph L. Holmes

of thinking and acting that will make him a constructive member of society. In the case of the delinquent, society has let accident build his life situations for him. In both cases the underlying psychological processes are the same. Only the products are different.

It was with such a conception of the process of character formation in mind that I undertook about three years ago to find out about the influence of newspapers as a cause of crime. Everyone who has written constructively on the causation of crime has commented on the evil influence of journalistic methods, not only as an interference with the administration of the law but as actual *incitements* to crime and suicide. It was natural that with the question of the effect of the papers in mind that I also should concern myself with the motion pictures. Many millions of people attend the pictures every week and, as I have suggested, the pictures convey patterns of conduct with a degree of efficiency that the printed page cannot approximate.

My first attack on the problem was by means of a questionnaire. I sought the opinions of those who had had experience with delinquents, the judges, the public prosecutors and the police officials of New York State. Of the 100 who replied there were a few, of course, who criticized the pictures but the great majority regarded them as of no importance as causes of delinquency and some actually believed them to be a good influence. A recent investigation conducted in Chicago showed that on the whole delinquent children attended the pictures more frequently than did non-delinquents. This was not interpreted as meaning that the pictures were a cause of their delinquencies but rather that they furnished the children with a refuge from their evil home surroundings.

Many statements have been made as to the number of children who attend the pictures. Critics of the pictures try to emphasize the evil of the pictures by making rash statements about the number of children who like and attend the pictures. You know the line of reasoning of the purient-minded, that whatever is liked and enjoyed is bad. To get some actual figures I undertook a census of the attendance on three days of the week at twelve different theatres. Altogether my assistants counted 150,000 people and tabulated them according to sex, and in the case of those who were obviously not adults, ages were estimated to within two years. Of course I did not find that the majority of those attending the pictures were children. There was great variation from one theatre to another but excluding one theatre which was in a small town and in which pictures were shown on only three days of the week the average per cent of children under sixteen years of age was about five. This is not so surprising when one stops to consider the sort of things portrayed in the pictures. I do not doubt that many children go to the pictures just because their elders go. It is the thing to do and they do not want to miss anything. I also know that many children are sent. The picture theatre is used by parents as a day nursery, a place to leave the child while shopping is done or bridge is played. There are some pictures whose themes appeal to children but on the whole they do not come within their range of interests.

In an attempt to find out how much and how lasting an impression a picture makes on children I showed one to five hundred children in parochial and in public schools. By transposing parts and shortening the picture I changed it from a farce to a portrayal of duplicity, crime and suicide. Immediately after the children saw the picture they were questioned about it and then required to write out the story. As one might anticipate only the older children, those in the eighth grade, could give an adequate and at all accurate account of the plot. Even while the picture was being shown the younger children were restless and inattentive. Only when there was a great deal of action did they react. The questions that were asked the children included some that were leading, that is, questions that were purposely framed to elicit wrong answers. These brought out the fact that all of the children were suggestible and the younger they were the more easily they were led into saying something that was not so. This fact should be kept in mind by those who question children as to the influence of the pictures. Some time ago I went to see a boy whom the papers reported as having been influenced to commit a murder by things that he had seen in the pictures. When I questioned him he told me that he had not seen a picture in six weeks and all that he could remember was that it was a comedy. Another case

that occurred up-state last summer was that of a boy who was reported by the papers as having been incited to murder by the pictures. The papers quoted a lady who had learned the cause of the boy's act while giving him a mental test. I happen to know that the lady did not ask him about any other influences and I also know that she asks every delinquent who is sent to her for examination the same leading question. By such a procedure one can get any explanation that he wishes. Especially is this so in the case of a child who finds himself in trouble. He seizes any lead that is offered to justify or explain away his fault.

Why the pictures are for the most part innocuous in so far as they might create attitudes that would show themselves in antisocial behavior, can be readily seen by contrasting them with the treatment of life situations by the newspapers. In the pictures, and of course only a small part of all pictures are portrayals of crime, the characters are fictitious. They do not have the prestige that real criminals exploited by the press have. The sequence of events is continuous from crime to punishment. In the newspaper accounts the offender is glorified, his deed is dwelt upon at length and if after months he is punished he is no longer news and is given no, or at least scant, space. The picture portrays the series of events without pause within an hour and a half. The newspaper with endless repetition treats of the deed and the criminal over a period of weeks and only, when the most extreme penalty is exacted, is it featured in the news and then with maudlin sentimentality. The difference between the two ways of treating crime stories is the difference between the constructive way of pointing a moral and the lurid sensationalism of current journalism.

A lively discussion followed Dr. Holmes' address and he answered the many questions put to him regarding motion picture reactions which his researches had disclosed.—The Editor.

(*Continued from page* 3)

committee, formed by the People's Institute, a citizen organization of New York City, which in the course of a few years grew into the National Board of Review. In those days the committee met once a week and in that one afternoon were able to see the entire product of the industry. With this background, seeing the enormous strides the motion picture has made and having the educational viewpoint that she has, it is not astonishing that Mrs. Price possesses the broad outlook for which she is noted.

A graduate of Hunter College, Mrs. Price served for six years as trustee of her Alma Mater. She has also done post graduate work at Radcliffe College, Columbia University and the New York School of Social Research.

THE age-old question of why patrons attend a particular show, or rather what persuaded them to attend one particular show, has been answered to the satisfaction of the publicity department of the Martin Beck theatre, New York. Seeking to solve the problem of rating at their result value the various items of showmanship and exploitation, the management gave out questionnaires at various performances of a recent production. Twenty thousand replies established the following percentages:

Recommended by a friend.....	52%
Producer's reputation	8%
Favorable newspaper reviews	12%
Newspaper advertising	8%
Radio exploitation	4%
Recommended by a ticket broker.	16%

This causes us to add "Tell your friends about the good pictures."

QUEEN MARY supervises the movie programs at Balmoral Castle when the royal family is there. The Queen herself chooses the films, which are quick-actioned American out-of-door drama, comedies and films on athletics and nature study. Her favorite films are those which show members of her family performing a public duty. Two years ago Queen Mary had a projector installed in the castle. One of the old drawing rooms, which Queen Victoria particularly liked, has been devoted to this modern form of entertainment.

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

COMMITTEE

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

WILTON A. BARRETT

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

Men Without Women

Directed by .....John Ford
Photographed by .....Joe August
Story by James K. McGuinness and John Ford

The Cast

Burke .....Kenneth McKenna
Costello .....J. Farrell MacDonald
Ensign Price .....Frank Albertson
Handsome .....Paul Page

IF the business of the screen as a dramatic art is to give us the essence of people as they are, the excitement and thrill of situation as it may really occur, and to use the imagination and the instrument through which it works in doing this so as to raise up before us the thing we call reality, then *Men Without Women* is a top grade film, one of the very best that the audible screen so far has given us.

For this swift, unornamented and visually compressed motion picture of what happened to the crew of a submarine sent to the bottom in a collision, seeks to handle only the material of probability, to use human nature so as to illuminate its meaning in a moment of stark disaster, and to select the stuff it would use so as to give us the complete scene as far as we need to have it to gain a vivid, veritable impression.

Almost all the action takes place in the submersible and in the water around and over her. We are given first a robust sequence showing the crew on shore leave in the far eastern port where the boat is on station—enough to humanize the characters who are soon to be thinking, in the close leaky walls of their sunken prison, of far different things than the antics of a day on shore. It is just the way to introduce us to a set of hale and hearty, happy-go-lucky young men whose adventurous natures have gotten them into a service demanding bravery, expertness and coolness at every turn. Here they are relaxing—a prelude to that tragic aftermath we are soon to witness when their boat, ordered from port, is rammed by another vessel in a storm, and goes down with all these gay fellows aboard, leaving them on the bottom with only the resources of their courage and knowledge of the contraption they are in to save them.

The scenes that follow at this point are greatly enhanced by the care which has been taken to give the details of a submarine visual accurateness—to make one see how the air is supplied, what happens when it is cut off, how it may be cut off; to see how the mechanism is a steel web the keeping intact of which is of paramount necessity to the life of the men in it; to understand the cool, swift and expert judgment demanded of those who have to know and work this mechanism as a means of saving their lives. Valves, wheels, dials, pipes and the complicated breeches of the torpedo tubes are given a dramatic meaning because pains have been taken to make us understand their operation and uses.

Cinematically the film through these sequences creates a fine thrill—the confined, slowly dying action in the sunken submarine, the bustle, life, anxiety above the water among the crews of the ships about the scene of rescue. The shots of the men shooting their comrades from the torpedo tubes as their boat

lies on the bottom (and attention has been given to the fact that she must not be stated to be sunk so deep as to rob this action of its credibility), the rescue of these men as they bob like corks to the surface boiling with discharged air by the boats that anxiously wait for them there, while the destroyers of the rescue fleet, their sirens blowing, cut through the waters around the scene, the action of the divers in locating the sunken craft and clearing her so her tubes can be used for the desperate expulsion of her crew—all this furnishes pictures that are of unfailing interest, thrill and veracity.

And here is a film to which sound brings undoubted values—the labored breathing of men in a suffocating atmosphere, the click of machinery moved by levers into place, the hiss of compressing air and the rush of its release, the gurgle of water, short-clipped words and strangled cries, make you feel the situation as if you were living through it.

Men Without Women is more nearly a mass film, in the sense that a whole personnel are the heroes, than is usually the case with the American film. One can think back to parts of *Potemkin* where the life of the ship was the life of the men, where the rhythmic machinery breathed a life of its own, where human existence was caught and held in the shell of steel with all its complicated parts, in which human life fomented and its needs and passions broke forth. Yes, one does not have to have pretty girls, tenors, or a marital mess to make fascinating motion pictures. Invention and intelligence and choice of material which does not have to be hard-baked into a formula of plot will do it. And the film which is not conventional is the one that breaks ground every time. There's nothing new in saying that, but it needs pictures like *Men Without Women* to drive its truth home.

Produced and distributed by Fox Film Corporation.

Sarah and Son

Directed by .....*Dorothy Arzner*
Photographed by .....*Charles Lang*
Novel by Timothy Shea

The Cast

Sarah Storm .....*Ruth Chatterton*
Howard Fanning ..... *Fredric March*
Jim Gray .....*Fuller Mellish, Jr.*
Bobby .....*Philippe de Lacy*

IN spite of the increasing tendency toward general improvement in sound films both as to story material and character portrayal the pictures of Ruth Chatterton stand out. This star, a stage actress of note, has brought to the screen both talent and training and the result is an ability to make a characterization poignantly real. It does not always fall to actresses of the footlights to be so successful before the kleig lights but every one of Miss Chatterton's pictures have rated high. *Sarah and Son,* her fifth all talking picture, is with the exception of *Madame X* the best to date. *Madame X* offered a much more diversified part, it covered a longer span of time and a more varied experience, but *Sarah and Son,* a drama of mother love, presents in Sarah Storm, the mother, a character of strong emotional appeal combining sympathetic understanding and unfaltering determination, of which the star makes the most.

The plot concerns a young mother robbed of her child by a lazy and rascally husband who takes it away when he disappears. She is untrained, unversed in the ways of the world and penniless and so unable to make any effective effort to find her infant son. A few years later when singing in a soldiers' hospital she encounters her husband dying and gets a clue to the whereabouts of the child. However, she finds that he is carefully guarded by foster parents who fail to believe her story and she is baffled in all attempts to regain him. Powerless to do anything and with an opportunity at hand to continue her music studies in Europe, she leaves but does not give up hope. When she returns a brilliant success in opera with self-assurance and wealth she once more takes up the fight for her son, now a lad of eleven.

The various phases of the life of this woman in changing circumstances but always motivated by mother love are made extremely interesting through Miss Chatterton's natural acting and the appealing timbre of her voice. Several able performances are given by others in the cast. Philippe de Lacy plays the like-

able, though too much coddled boy. Fredric March, who has a number of excellent picture performances to his credit, plays the young lawyer who is finally convinced of the justification of Sarah Storm's claim and assists her in regaining her son.

The direction is the work of Dorothy Arzner one of the very few women directors and is responsible for giving a fine balance to the story which plays so repeatedly upon the theme of baffled mother love. The adaptation of the novel for the screen was made by Zoe Akins, the well-known playwright. *Sarah and Son* therefore results from the merging of the fine work of three women noted for their achievements in the fields of motion picture acting, directing and writing.

Produced and distributed by Paramount.

The Vagabond King

Directed by .....*Ludwig Berger*
Photographed by .....*Henry Gerrard*
Play "If I Were King" by Justin Huntley McCarthy

The Cast

Francois Villon .....*Dennis King*
Katherine .....*Jeannette McDonald*
Louis XI .....*O. P. Heggie*
Huguette .....*Lillian Roth*
Thibault .....*Warner Oland*

THE VAGABOND KING is chiefly interesting, aside from its entertainment appeal, and with regard to any relation which it may have to the art of the modern film, for the integral use of color which it has attempted.

Here you have a production in which color was conceived of as an essential, rather than a decorative adjunct. Sets were designed for palette values and canvas effects—the pictorial attributes were perceived as other than those of a black and white pattern, and a background was kept in mind that would retain the characteristics of a painting in motion. If this painting was not completely realized, lay the shortcoming to a technology in color reproduction and transference that still, at least from the standards and viewpoint of the painter, is far from the state where it can give unblemished results.

The selection of plot material was nevertheless wise for what the film was supposed to do. Francois Villon, no matter how softened and romantically externalized the portrait may be made, is a personage about whom the mind imagines, when it imagines at all, in terms of richness where the smoky browns of old-world taverns, the ochre of sunlight in crooked streets, the gay fabrics of medieval raiment are pictorial components. If, then, you are given a Villon who entered palaces, who went about in them as a prince, who sang love serenades to gorgeous, pure and moon-struck ladies in the shadows of rose-filled gardens, you go still further into those realms to be rendered by the brush rather than the crayon, in splendid or tender hues. To use the brush instead of something that comes out in black and white is, in that case, a defensible principle, whether the method is far enough advanced or not. Judgment of the result may withhold a heavy hand.

Dennis King, moreover, is probably what the public visualizes Villon as having been like, if it stops to visualize that song-ridden rascal. And Dennis King, within the limits set for him and within the limits he sets for himself, is lively, loving, tough and debonair as the story happens to call for, and the Louis of O. P. Heggie, a well conceived character that Scott would not have found much fault with, provides him with an excellent foil. Some day a picture may be made that gives us a Villon stripped of his romantic tinsel. Color will also be used in that film. And, such is the technical speed by which miracles are accomplished in these days, a Villon may then emerge in tints and shades and tones of the true painter's art, swarthy and dirty and mad and bad and a poet, such as he was, which will stamp the screen as a medium, with its adjuncts of sound and speech and color, able to give us the breath and feeling of life. If it ever gives us that Villon, it will have forgotten the cardboard figure for which we are indebted to Mr. Justin McCarthy, and more recently to the gentlemen who ornamented his effigy with song and melody, a combination that permits *The Vagabond King,* irrespective of its other virtues, to give us but a pale and perfumed variation of the earthy genius who frequented the drinking cellars, and some other places, of old Paris. *Produced and distributed by Paramount.*

BETTER FILMS FORUM
EDITOR: BETTINA GUNCZY
Department of the Better Films National Council

The Little Theatre Guild Takes Up Movies

By MRS. JACK CRAWFORD

Mrs. Crawford, Secretary of the Little Theatre Guild of New Haven, Conn., one of our correspondents who has been very successful with Juniors' Matinees answering a request for news about them sends us not only this helpful and detailed story but promises more information as well so we are happy to pass it on.—Editor's Note.

ABOUT two years ago the Little Theatre Guild first thought of showing moving pictures, choosing pictures such as *Crime and Punishment* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* for their programs. The pictures were shown about once a month, and at that time a special matinee was run for children with a different program.

It soon appeared that to be successful it was essential to run these children's programs regularly, the expense of special advertising, et cetera being too great. Also children lost interest unless they could be sure of finding pictures every Saturday. As the charge for films and operators is by the day, it cost very little more to have two performances than to have one. Since the beginning of last October the Guild has therefore been having regular weekly programs for children every Saturday at 10.30 in the morning and 2.30 in the afternoon. The afternoon performances are always better attended but there are a certain number of children who come regularly in the morning, and a varying number who come sometimes at one hour and sometimes at the other.

By experience I have found that the most popular pictures and the best from the box-office point of view, are those that the children are familiar with. *Robin Hood* with Douglas Fairbanks, *Peter Pan, A Kiss for Cinderella, The Circus* with Charlie Chaplin have been the most successful. Recently we showed *Siegfried* for four evenings and also at the children's matinees and had to turn people away from the Saturday afternoon performance.

Other pictures we have shown are: *Simba, Old Ironsides, The Yankee Clipper, Special Delivery* with Eddie Cantor which proved not so successful, *Hold 'Em Yale,* on the day of the Princeton game, *Nanook of the North.* The next programs will be *The Covered Wagon* and *The Thief of Bagdad.*

Our charges are 35 cents for children and 50 cents for adults. There are quite a number of old ladies who attend these children's pictures regularly. Besides the features we have usually an Aesop's Fable, News Reel, Our Gang Comedy, according to the length of the program. One excellent two reel comedy is an English one with Leslie Henson called *Joyland,* handled by Educational.

We sell books of 6 tickets for $1.50 for children and $2.50 for adults. Children who come regularly or people who bring large parties of children therefore pay only 25 cents. The theatre is small, 284 seats, and very safe, and is in a good residential neighborhood a few minutes from the trolley. We cut down expenses by having members of the Guild act as ticket sellers and children as ushers. This is a much coveted job.

The newspapers are very good about giving us free publicity in the society columns. If we are sending any notice to our members we mention the picture which is to be shown on Saturday, and I have a list of about 250 covering the three principal private schools. Otherwise our publicity is by posters in the schools. The public schools allow us to put these up.

The interest in the children's movies has grown enormously during the three or four months we have been having regular Saturday pictures. It has increased the interest in the Guild and its other activities so that the

Guild has greatly benefited by this new venture.

I will be very glad to give further information to anyone who is interested. Address all inquiries to Mrs. Jack Crawford, 14 Lincoln Street, New Haven, Conn. or to the Little Theatre Guild of New Haven.

MRS. LEON A. McINTIRE, New Jersey State D.A.R. Chairman of Better Films, leaves nothing undone to foster the better films movement in her state. The following comprehensive questionnaire was sent out by her to the different chairmen:

"1. Have you had a Chapter meeting on Better Films?

2. Has your Chapter purchased any of the Flag Trailers? If so, where and how are they being used?

3. Have you used or sponsored the use of any of the Chronicles of America Photoplays?

4. Do you receive the lists of pictures previewed by the National D.A.R. Committee?

5. Do you receive the Weekly Guide to Selected Pictures from the National Board of Review? If not would you like to have it?

6. Do you publish in your local papers lists of selected pictures made up from the above lists?

7. Are you a subscriber to the NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW MAGAZINE?

8. Have you had part in a Motion Picture Benefit? Please give details.

9. Have you formed a local Better Films Committee?

10. Have you done any community work for Better Films? Give details.

11. Do you cooperate with other local organizations in the work for Better Films?

12. Be sure to send with this questionnaire all clippings you have on local activities for Better Films."

This questionnaire undoubtedly contains valuable ideas for other leaders in community better films work.

Mrs. McIntire recently spoke over the radio concerning her D.A.R. activities. Her talk was packed with helpful suggestions and information. She said in part—"Forty-five chapter chairmen organized under the State Chairman of New Jersey are intelligently at work on Better Films. This committee is affiliated with the Better Films National Council of the National Board of Review, of which Council the State Chairman is also a member. The Chairman and several members of the committee give one day each week to the previewing of motion pictures in the various companies' projection rooms before these films are released to the public. This state committee publishes in the local newspapers lists of endorsed and selected films stating audience suitability. These lists are made up from those obtained bi-monthly from the national D.A.R. committee composed of thirty-five members previewing daily pictures made on the west coast and from the weekly guide to selected pictures furnished by the National Board of Review, each one of the lists giving detailed information concerning pictures such as art of production, entertainment value, and audience suitability, also pictures suitable for Junior Matinees as well as films recommended to be permanently kept for future use especially those suitable for schools and libraries."

THE Cleveland Cinema Club holds the honor of having sent the largest number of delegates to the recent annual conference of the National Board of any affiliated committee located at a great distance from New York City. Committees in neighboring towns were represented by a score or so while several committees from afar sent two delegates but the Cleveland Cinema Club was represented by three—Mrs. Alberta E. Clark, the president, Mrs. Emma NeVille, chairman, Educational Committee and Mrs. Amy Louise Weber, chairman, Ways and Means Committee.

It was very pleasant to renew at first hand our contact with this group and to talk with the members regarding the plans and programs for the future. And it is most gratifying to learn from them that they derived help and inspiration from the Conference. The President has written that she plans to use Conference material in different ways in her work and the February Bulletin of the Club contained a thought provoking quotation from the Conference address of Dr. Walter W. Pettit. This well prepared Bulletin is widely circulated in Cleveland carrying to the public word of the recommended pictures and notes and ideas of interest regarding motion pictures. The following is another quota-

tion from the latest bulletin—"Cannot the educator integrate the motion picture in her plan of training adolescents for their leisure hours? A hobbie class on the movie could keep a catalog of good actors and their best plays. Reviews of pictures could be clipped and discussed. Library exhibits about backgrounds could be planned." Perhaps Better Films Committees may find in this a way to interest young people in their Committee.

THE latest report from the Jacksonville (Fla.) Better Films Council states, "A talk on the talkies by a man who knows featured the regular monthly meeting of the Council for Mr. Frederick Wynne-Jones, president of Ufa Films Corporation was the guest speaker. Among other statements he predicted that Florida will yet become a motion picture center. 'Florida is an ideal place for making pictures,' he said, 'and the time will probably come in the near future when its wonderful climate and diversified scenery will be utilized by the industry.' Mr. Wynne-Jones devoted most of his talk to the problems of picture producers in general and the advent of the talkies in particular. He called *Hallelujah* the outstanding picture of the year." Mr. W. M. Marr, Boy Scout executive, gave at this meeting a most comprehensive report of the National Board of Review Conference which he recently attended as a delegate from the Council.

THE Home and School Association of Leonia, New Jersey, had as guest speakers at a recent meeting Dr. Louis I. Harris, former health commissioner of New York City and a member of the Executive Committee of the National Board of Review and Mr. Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary of the National Board. The speakers outlined the community Better Films Committee plan of organization which has been found most effective in communities wishing to assist in having films of the better type supported. The subject of educational films and the value of using such films for entertainment and educational work in schools and other organizations was discussed. Repetition and visualization, the speakers said, by means of the motion picture, makes the subject much easier for the child to comprehend. In Germany the greatest progress has been made in using the educational film in the school. Following the talks of Dr. Harris and Mr. Barrett several films of an educational nature were shown. This Association is now making plans to conduct junior matinees with the help of the local theatre manager who has expressed his willingness to co-operate.

DR. C. B. GLENN, superintendent of the Birmingham (Ala.) schools, has been reappointed a member of the Birmingham Better Films Committee for 1930. The Birmingham Committee is fortunate in having Dr. Glenn, whose interest in educational services is well known. Dr. Glenn said in his acceptance that he would be pleased to continue his membership and "trust that I may be of some service to you in this highly important endeavor. Assuring you of my best wishes for the success of our committee in its work and the pleasure the Board of Education has in cooperating in your efforts to give to the children of the city the very best pictures."

The following excerpts from letters of other prominent men and women of Birmingham show in what regard the work of this Committee is held there:

Mrs. R. M. Howell writes: "I am sincerely interested in the work you are doing. You are certainly engaged in a lasting, worthwhile work and I appreciate it."

Mrs. C. S. Gannaway, president, writes: "The Arts and Crafts Club wishes to congratulate the Birmingham Better Films Committee on the splendid work they are doing. We think the pictures shown in Birmingham are fine and hope the good pictures and work will continue. If we can assist you in any possible way we will be glad to do so."

Dr. L. E. Brubaker writes: "I will be glad to serve on the Better Films Committee as in the past. Thanking you for this opportunity."

Dr. George Denny of the University, in acknowledging the receipt of the money for scholarships for two young women at Alabama said he was tremendously gratified in view of the generous action of the committee in voting these two scholarships and that he "appreciated the opportunity to

share with you in the administration of them."

Dr. Henry M. Edmonds: "I congratulate you on the work you are doing." It must be most encouraging and gratifying to the Birmingham Committee to know they have the whole-hearted approval of the representative people in their city.

DR. WALTER W. PETTIT, Director of the Department of Community Organization, New York School of Social Work, speaking at a meeting of the Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee to an interested and large audience, impressed the fact that the schools are allowing a great factor of interest to escape them in not making more use of the motion picture, especially in regard to the child's leisure time. He brought forth many interesting facts in regard to this matter which the audience received enthusiastically. Dr. Pettit is much in demand as a speaker at Better Films gatherings and his talks are most entertaining and instructive.

Several beautiful *Robert Bruce Scenics* were greatly enjoyed at a recent meeting of the Rutherford Committee. These films loaned through the courtesy of the Educational Film Exchange by the National Board of Review presented with wonderful technique and artisticness different phases of animal life together with beautiful scenes of the great outdoors. Mrs. Julius Lovington, Chairman of the Juniors' Matinees Committee, reported on the second of the highly successful series of Saturday morning matinees that this busy Committee is conducting. To an audience of over 1100 children the Committee with the never failing cooperation of the theatre manager presented *Cinderella* and *Nanook of the North.* Mrs. J. T. Luce of the "Do You Know" Column made an interesting report on the varied uses of the motion picture other than for entertainment, among them being the use in army training camps for instruction. Mrs. H. B. Pettengill, the vice-president, speaking on the furtherance of closer relationships between the committee and the National Board said, "The decisions of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures can be accepted without question. It is an entirely disinterested body not connected with the motion picture industry. Its aim is to bring health, intelligence and guidance to the industry through the selection and approval of fine pictures rather than in the censorship of bad." This clear understanding of the work of the Board by community groups is indeed most encouraging and heartening.

The feature picture for the third of the series of Rutherford Juniors' Matinees at which the attendance was 1500 children, was *The Rough Riders,* and the two historical films *The Flag* and *The Call to Arms,* short subjects, were shown because of their relation to the times of Washington and Lincoln, whose birthdays were celebrated. For this month of birthdays of famous men the Boy and Girl Scouts had planned an appropriate and entertaining prologue. The latest program consisted of the favorite of the children, *A Kiss for Cinderella,* and the short subject made especially for children, *The Little Dutch Tulip Girl,* and for comedy an Aesop fable.

The first membership party of the Rutherford Committee proved highly successful, with distinguished guests from nearly every organization in town being present. Mrs. Harry Grover, president, extended cordial greetings to all the guests and Mrs. H. B. Pettingill, vice-president, read a most interesting report of the sixth annual conference of the National Board of Review, which was attended by a large representation of this Committee. Several very unusual and entertaining amateur films furnished the evening's entertainment, the first being the Photoplay Magazine contest winner for 1929, H_2O, made by Ralph Steiner. The "Scout Jamboree" pictures taken by Henry Becton depicted the experiences of the Scouts from this section of New Jersey from the time they went in training for their overseas trip until they greeted the Statue of Liberty on their return. The picture was presented with a great degree of skill and it is most remarkable that so young a boy should have shown such fine discrimination in the selection of the subjects filmed. Mr. Ben Jackson presented some very entertaining pictures he had filmed of the canoe tilting contest at the Bayside Yacht Club, a motor boat race on the Passaic and several other shots.

Selected Pictures Guide

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

Frances C. Barrett
Helen Cahill

EDITOR

Bettina Gunczy

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience. *Pictures recommended for the family audience (12 years up).*

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience (18 years up).*

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays".*

Be Yourself

Directed by.....Thornton Freeland
Featuring .....Fanny Brice
Story by Joseph Jackson

FANNY, a night club hostess, falls in love with an ex-prize fighter and determines to get him into the ring again. She and her brother become his managers but on the eve of the big fight he is disqualified. They arrange this detail and he wins fame and glory. But fame and glory do not agree with him and through his conceit Fanny almost loses him.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—10 reels)

Beau Bandit

Directed by.....Lambert Hillyer
Featuring .....Rod La Rocque
Screen story by Wallace Smith

OUTDOOR sound pictures are an agreeable relief to the movie patron, however much he may like the dialogue films. Here is one laid on the Mexican border wherein Rod La Rocque plays a suave and romantic bandit. Riding into a town one morning this bandit finds himself and his fat man "Friday" entirely out of funds and decides to rob the local bank. It appears nothing will stop him for he easily eludes a posse of a dozen riders out to get him but when he hears the sentimental singing of a lady all else is forgotten and he devotes his twenty-four hours in the village to clearing up the financial and love tangle of the lovely maiden in a bold and clever fashion. The star is quite pleasing in this mixture of comedy and western and uses an amusing brogue.

For the family audience.

(RKO—9 reels)

The Big Party

Directed by .....John Blystone
Featuring .....Sue Carol
Screen story by Harlan Thompson

FIRED from a five and ten cent store a girl obtains a position in an exclusive gown shop. The position requires her to entertain the out-of-town buyers and though she lives in luxury she soon learns it is not worth the price and returns to poverty and the boy she has always loved.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—7 reels)

The Bridal Party in Hardanger

A DRAMA produced in Norway with the beautiful scenery of that country as its background. A young Norwegian girl who left her family when they migrated to America in order to stay near the boy she loves is cast aside by him. In later years as a widow of means she seeks revenge but only succeeds in bringing unhappiness to her daughter. The story moves slowly but is on the whole very interesting.

For the family audience.

(Rasmus Breistein—8 reels)

*The Case of Sergeant Grischa

Directed by ..... *Herbert Brennon*
Featuring ..... *Charles Morris*, *Betty Compson*

Novel by Arnold Zewig

AN adaptation of the popular war novel of last year. A young Russian makes his escape from a German prison camp. With the aid of a Russian refugee girl whom he encounters in the forest he attempts to continue his way with an assumed indentification. He is recaptured and imprisoned but awaits his fate hoping that he will later be free to go and visit his mother which hope was the motive for his first escape. Though strong pressure is brought to bear by certain officials when he is condemned to death he is executed. The picture follows the book closely but fails to maintain the interest found there because it is in some instances unsuitably cast.

For the mature audience.

(RKO—10 reels)

Clancy in Wall Street

Directed by ..... *Ted Wilde*
Featuring ..... *Charlie Murray*
Screen story by Ralph Bell and Jack Wagner

A COMEDY concerning an Irishman and a Scotchman who are partners in a plumbing establishment. Clancy takes a chance on the stock market and is highly successful so much so that he leaves the business and moves his family to better quarters, but his glory does not last long and he is glad to move back and resume his old life much to the happiness of all.

For the family audience.

(Aristocrat—8 reels)

Dark Red Roses

Directed by ..... *Sinclair Hill*
Featuring ..... *Stewart Rome*, *Frances Doble*

Story by Stacy Aumonier

THIS is an English film telling a story of jealousy which mounts to a superb and thrilling climax. The opening scenes of a country home with its surrounding garden awakening to a lovely summer morning are delightful in their quiet charm. The master of the estate, a noted sculptor, suspects that his wife has more than a friendly interest in a young cellist. She is deeply hurt by his suspicions but he is unable to control his feelings. Finally, one evening the sculptor at his wife's request takes a cast of the cellist's hands and having secured them firmly in plaster, he announces his unique punishment of his rival.

For the mature audience.

(International—6 reels)

The Fighting Legion

Directed by ..... *Harry J. Brown*
Featuring ..... *Ken Maynard*

Screen story by Bennett Cohen

A ROMANCE of the West. Dave Hayes comes to town to locate the one who killed Dawson, a man who had helped him. He establishes himself in a ranger's office. Suspicious of him, a cattle buyer tries to put the shooting of Dawson on Dave. However, the hotel owner's daughter has fallen in love with Dave and she helps to clear the case. Ken Maynard sings several songs in his pleasing voice and Tarzan, his beautiful horse, does his share to make the picture interesting.

For the family audience.

(Universal—8 reels)

Framed

Directed by ..... *George Archainbaud*
Featuring ..... *Evelyn Brent*

Screen story by Paul Schofield

DRAMA of revenge. A young girl believes her father was framed by the Chief of Police and swears to avenge his death. A boy comes to the night club where she works and when she learns he is the chief's son she plans her revenge. However, discovering a plot that the club owner has to incriminate the boy with a murder she realizes her love for him and by a clever ruse saves him. An interesting story well worked out.

For the mature audience.

(RKO—7 reels)

✓ Free and Easy

Directed by ..... *Edward Sedgwick*
Featuring ..... *Buster Keaton*

Screen play by Richard Schrayer

BUSTER KEATON won his laurels as a frozen faced, tight lipped comedian

and perhaps there is a regret when viewing his sound films that he did not continue as such but nevertheless we have him here in a comedy full of mirth in which he plays Elmer Butts, the goofy manager of Elvira, a Kansas beauty contest winner. Elmer must keep faith with the local Chamber of Commerce who appointed him and make Elvira a success in Hollywood. But what he does in Hollywood is to plunge into all sorts of dilemmas and mix-ups until finally to get him out of the way the directors put him in a picture and learn to their surprise that they have a new comedian. The picture is exceedingly amusing where the star meets with many comic situations in his helpless manner but less so where he begins making slapstick.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

The Furies

Directed by ..... *Alan Crosland*
Featuring ..... *H. B. Warner*, *Lois Wilson*
Play by Zoe Akins

A STRANGE story of a wealthy man who is murdered and his young and lovely wife who is suspected of the crime. The dead man's lawyer, a man of mystery, tries to place the blame elsewhere but realizing that the girl is in danger he calls her to his home and after confessing to the crime jumps through the window. A splendid piece of acting by Mr. Warner as the man of mystery.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

The Golden Calf

Directed by ..... *Millard Webb*
Featuring ..... *Jack Mulhall*
Story by Aaron Davis

SECRETLY in love with her employer, a commercial artist, a plain and old-fashioned girl suddenly discovers that she has the perfect limb measurement for which her employer has advertised in order to draw an advertisement for a hosiery manufacturer. With the aid of a friend the girl is completely rejuvenated and wins the contest. Later he confesses his love for her and she confesses her deception.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—8 reels)

Guilty?

Directed by ..... *George B. Seitz*
Featuring ..... *Virginia Valli*, *John Holland*
Story "The Black Sheep" by Dorothy Howell

CIRCUMSTANTIAL evidence has convicted many an innocent man and in this film we are shown two cases—one man's life being entirely ruined and another saved from execution only at the last moment. Senator Polk, imprisoned for bribery, is released on parole ten years later, the disgrace having killed his wife and socially ostracised his daughter, Carolyn. He finds her in love with the son of the judge who convicted him. Although she succeeds in reconciling her father to their engagement, the Judge refuses to allow his son to marry her and, upon his threat to send her father back to prison, Carolyn breaks the engagement. The Senator, heartbroken at her unhappiness, commits suicide so that they may marry. Evidence, however, leads to the conviction of the Judge's son for murder. The fine acting and well developed plot make this an absorbing picture.

For the mature audience.

(Columbia—7 reels)

Hello, Sister!

Directed by ..... *Walter Lang*
Featuring ..... *Olive Borden*, *Lloyd Hughes*
Story "Clipped Wings" by Rita Lambert

THE much discussed "younger generation" furnishes the subject for this lively story. Olive Borden, playing the lead, is a fine example of the modern jazz-mad maiden until by the terms of her grandfather's will she is forced to lead a wholesome life for six months. Getting up for 8:30 breakfast would seem almost an impossibility for one who had been used to retiring only a few hours earlier, and the other conditions imposed seem equally fantastic to her set, especially going to church. But before long the young lady discovers that there is really joy in such a way of living and she enters as wholeheartedly into the work of the church bazaar as she formerly had in the night club dance. When she meets a particularly nice

young lawyer at the church it is not difficult to forget the boys in their high-powered cars. And the surprise comes after six months when it is discovered that grandfather's will is not what it seemed. George Fawcett is good as the grandfather. Miss Borden gives a spirited performance.

For the mature audience.

(Sono Art—World Wide—8 reels)

Hide Out

Directed by .....*Reginald Barker*
Featuring ..... *James Murray*, *Katherine Crawford*
Screen story by Arthur Ripley and Lambert Hillyer

A YOUNG college boy who is a famous stroke oarsman on the crew decides to leave college and try racketeering. He is not so successful though and returns to school thinking it a safe hide out until the affair has blown over. The detective discovers him however, and trying to test the boy's loyalty and wish to go straight tells him if he does not throw the big race he will arrest him and send him up. Torn between love for a girl and loyalty to his college and his desire for freedom the boy consents but his sense of fair play wins.

For the family audience.

(Universal—7 reels)

Honey

Directed by .....*Wesley Ruggles*
Featuring .....*Nancy Carroll*
Play "Come Out of the Kitchen" by Alice Miller and A. E. Thomas

A PROUD but impoverished young Southern girl is forced to lease the old homestead to an eccentric but wealthy woman from the North. Having hired three servants only one appears and needing the money and realizing the servants must be there when the woman arrives the girl acts as cook and forces her brother to don the butler's livery. Complications, of course, arise, the daughter's fiance falling in love with the cook and the daughter herself falling in love with the butler. However, everything comes out all right when the wealthy and fastidious Mrs. Howland learns that her servants are aristocrats and having enough money for all she is quite satisfied with the turn of affairs.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Mountain Justice

Directed by .....*Harry J. Brown*
Featuring .....*Ken Maynard*
Screen story by Bennett Cohen

DOWN among the Kentucky mountains the Harlands and the McTavishes, having declared an end to their old feud, are living peacefully together. The parts of the mountaineers are all well played and they furnish much amusement with their singing, fiddling and dancing. To this settlement, concealing his identity, comes a young McTavish bent on avenging the murder of his father by a Harland. His mysterious actions arouse the enmity of the Harlands, all except Coral who straightway falls in love with him. Difficulties beset him on all sides before he finally gets his man.

For the family audience.

(Universal—8 reels)

The Light of Western Stars

Directed by..... *Otto Brower*, *Edwin Knopf*
Featuring ..... *Richard Arlen*, *Mary Brian*
Novel by Zane Grey

THIS is the sound adaptation of Zane Grey's popular novel—the silent version having been produced some years ago. In this romance of the West a young Eastern girl tries to manage her brother's ranch after he has been murdered. The love interest is developed between the girl and a cowboy who really takes charge of the ranch and succeeds in trapping her brother's murderer. The photography is excellent, the cast well selected and the picture holds the interest of the spectator to the end.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Lovin' the Ladies

Directed by .....*Melville Brown*
Featuring .....*Richard Dix*
Play "I Love You" by William Le Baron

RICHARD DIX again delights his followers with a hilarious comedy which

starts out as a satire on wealth, showing that brains and money are seldom found together but Dix's troubles in connection with a certain perfumed divan far overshadow this idea. Dix plays the part of a well educated electrician who is hired by a wealthy man to prove his theory that given the right environment any two people can be made to fall in love. Dix is dressed in fine clothes, taken to a beautiful country home and instructed to make love to a certain girl on a scented divan in a dimly lit conservatory with the moonlight outside the door and soft music in the background. There are many ladies present and he never seems to find himself with the right girl in the right place. Things become quite terribly muddled leaving him with a great deal to explain to the girl with whom he has really fallen in love.

For the family audience.

(R-K-O—7 reels)

Murder Will Out

Directed by ..... *Clarence Badger*
Featuring ..... *Jack Mulhall*, *Lila Lee*

Screen story by Murray Leinster

HERE is a murder mystery which is a take-off on the thriller of this type. The mysterious messages, the windy weather, the lurking figures are all present. Whether the surprise ending unravels the mystery or not is a question but at least that which leads up to it has held a measure of suspense. The actors seem to feel the spirit of the plot and play it none too seriously.

For the family audience.

(First National—7 reels)

On the Border

Directed by ..... *William McGann*
Featuring ..... *Rin Tin Tin*

Screen story by Lillian Hayward

AN old Spanish don and his lovely young daughter offer their hospitality to a band of men who are smuggling Chinese into the United States. These men decide to use the old gentleman and the girl as tools but two apparent hoboes and the girl's dog decide otherwise. Rin Tin Tin gives his usual stellar performance.

For the family audience.

(Warner—5 reels)

On the Level

Directed by ..... *Irwin Cummings*
Featuring ..... *Victor McLaglen*

Screen story William K. Wells

A DRAMA of a riveter who falls for the blandishments of a beautiful blonde. She persuades him to join with her and her company who pose as a group of philanthropists who have purchased a tract of land and are selling it in small lots cheap to the working man. The boy induces his companions to buy the land and when the denouement of the criminals arrives they almost lose faith in him but he is able to restore it.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—6 reels)

Only the Brave

Directed by ..... *Frank Tuttle*
Featuring ..... *Gary Cooper*, *Mary Brian*

Story by Keene Thompson

ROMANCE of the Civil War. Disillusioned with life because he has found his sweetheart unfaithful a young Northern boy volunteers to go behind the enemy's lines with false information so that he will be treated as a spy. The well laid plan goes wrong, however, when he meets and falls in love with a Southern girl and through her is saved.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Paramount—8 reels)

The Other Tomorrow

Directed by ..... *Lloyd Bacon*
Featuring ..... *Billie Dove*

Story by Octavus Roy Cohen

A YOUNG Southern girl returning from her honeymoon renews her friendship with a boy who had loved her but whose love she did not reciprocate. The husband becomes insanely jealous and tries to sever the friendship but is accidentally killed so the course of true love eventually runs smoothly.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

Puttin' on the Ritz

Directed by ..... *Edward Sloman*
Featuring ..... *Harry Richman*

Screen story by John W. Considine

ANOTHER romance of the vaudeville stage bringing to the screen the Broadway night club favorite, Harry Richman. A struggling vaudeville artist and his partner find themselves booked for Broadway. This rise to fame completely turns the man's head but the girl remains her own sweet self. One night they are entertaining some of their new friends when two of their old pals come to call and the man treats them as though he were ashamed of them. Quarrelling over this the girl leaves him and makes good alone. Of course they are at last reunited through one of their old songs and are happy again. Without the song hits the play would not go far.

For the family audience.

(United Artists—10 reels)

* The Rogue Song

Directed by.....*Lionel Barrymore*
Featuring .....*Lawrence Tibbett*
Operetta "Gypsy Love" by Franz Lehar, A. M. Willner and Robert Brodansky

THIS technicolor production based upon the operetta "Gypsy Love", brings Lawrence Tibbett, leading baritone of the Metropolitan Opera Company, to the screen. A tribal chieftain of a band of mountain bandits, meets and falls in love with a Russian princess who is attracted by his singing. He learns that his sister has been betrayed by the princess' brother and carries the princess off to his mountain fortress for revenge. Through a ruse she causes him to be captured but when he sings to her while he is being flogged she senses his profound love and has him released. Though they must part they part with the hope that some day love will find a way. Lawrence Tibbett in addition to his marvelous voice lends a charm and vivacity to the film by his splendid acting. The production is well directed and most excellently cast.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

The above picture will be given special mention in the Exceptional Photoplays Department in the next issue.

Slightly Scarlet

Directed by.....*Louis Gasnier*
Featuring..... {*Evelyn Brent* / *Clive Brook*
Novel "Blackbirds" Harry James Smith

A CROOK drama. Weary of being a crook's tool, a young girl promises to do one more job. She is sent to Nice to pose as a countess and procure a valuable necklace and at the home of the woman who owns the jewels, where she is being entertained as royalty, she becomes infatuated with a man who is there for the same purpose. The girl and the man are saved from themselves through their love for each other. The story is well worked out and the suspense is sustained throughout.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Song of the West

Directed by.....*Ray Enright*
Featuring ..... {*John Boles* / *Vivienne Segal*
Operetta "Rainbow" by Laurence Stallings, Oscar Hammerstein II and Vincent Youmanns

A ROMANCE of covered wagon days. A young man becomes mixed up in an argument kills a brother officer and flees to the west where he becomes a scout. One day arriving at Fort Independence he finds his old regiment there and with it the man who caused his former disgrace, a scuffle follows and his enemy is killed and thus he is forced to flee again. After many misfortunes he is at last reinstated in the Army and is once more happy, having the respect of his comrades and the love of the commandant's daughter. The story is interesting and the color and music add greatly to the production.

For the family audience.

(Warner—9 reels)

*The Story of Goesta Berling

Directed by.....*Mauritz Stiller*
Featuring ..... {*Greta Garbo* / *Lars Hansen*
Novel by Selma Lagerlof

HERE is a film made some years ago in Sweden with Greta Garbo, very different from the Garbo we know but quite as fascinating and effective, Lars Hansen, very handsome and dashing, and the noted Swedish

actress, Gerda Lundequist. The story concerns a young minister, dismissed from the Church, who lives, together with a crew of impoverished noblemen, on the bounty of the wealthy Margaret Samelius. The lovely girl on the neighboring estate, most unhappy in her marriage, is much attracted by him and realizes the fine talents he is wasting by his reckless life. Finally, under the influence of her sympathy and belief in him, Goesta Berling renounces his old life and makes himself worthy of her love. The film is a remarkably beautiful one with its gorgeous scenes of the countryside covered with snow gleaming under the winter stars and the splendor of the lake over which the dog-sled with the two lovers races in mad and glorious flight. It is certainly a picture not to be missed.

For the mature audience.

(Fred O. Renard—12 reels)

Such Men Are Dangerous

Directed by .....*Kenneth Hawks*
Featuring .....*Warner Baxter*
Story by Elinor Glynn

AN interesting drama of a wealthy man with a hideous face and form who believing that his wealth can buy anything, even love, marries a young and beautiful girl who has been more or less forced into the marriage. She deserts him and he sails for Germany giving the idea that he has committed suicide. There he goes to a famous plastic surgeon and after many months returns, unrecognizable, to avenge himself. His better self triumphs and he is rewarded with the love of the girl who had so despised him. Warner Baxter's portrayal of the repulsive and later attractive character deserves more than casual mention.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—8 reels)

Three Sisters

Directed by .....*Paul Sloane*
Featuring .....*Louise Dresser*
Screen story by Marion Orth and George Brooks

A MOTHER who has parted with two of her daughters when the youngest is married and the eldest goes to seek her fortune as a singer, is left with the third daughter when her son-in-law goes to war. The daughter dies leaving an infant son and not long afterwards the young soldier is killed leaving the grandmother with only the baby to comfort her and this comfort does not last long as he is taken away from her through a cruel ruse. Left penniless by the misfortunes of war she finds employment as a dishwasher in a restaurant and it is here one day that she encounters her two daughters who have made their fortune in America and is made happy in her old age.

For the family audience.

(Fox—7 reels)

Troopers Three

Directed by .....*Norman Taurog*
Featuring .....*Rex Lease*
Screen story by Arthur Guy Empey

IF you want a lazy existence then stay away from the army is what three unsuccessful vaudeville comedians learn in this funny comedy. A young smart-alec type of person always making plans tells his two companions that if they all sign up for thirty days in the training camp they will have plenty of time to practice their big act and make Broadway. However, they find they are signed up for three years instead with days of discipline and cavalry drill ahead and what do they know of such things. Their rooky hardships are amusing but the best part of the film consists of some fine shots of cavalry riding and horsemanship.

For the family audience.

(Tiffany—9 reels)

Under a Texas Moon

Directed by.....*Michael Curtiz*
Featuring .....*Frank Fay*
Screen story by Stewart Edward White

HERE is a picture colorful indeed as it is produced entirely in color and relates the adventures of a very colorful character. Considering himself the most dashing and daring caballero of all Mexico our hero rides into a Texas border town for a Fourth of July celebration. Challenged here because of his braggadocio to the feat of tracking down a cattle rustler, a quest in which six men have already failed, he accepts. He succeeds needless to say and has his little joke besides. His prowess with the ladies he does not underestimate either and sings of love to every

glamorous maiden he encounters. The vivid settings and the gay costumes lend a fitting background to this romantic tale.

For the family audience.

(Warner—8 reels)

Undertow

Directed by .....*Harry Pollard*
Featuring .....*Mary Nolan*
Story by Wilbur Daniel Steele

A DRAMA of the sea. A girl engaged to a light house inspector falls in love with a young light house keeper and they are married. For revenge the inspector has the boy assigned to a desolate, rock-bound house and after five years during which time the boy has become blind, goes to persuade the girl to return to shore with him. Weary of the life she has been leading she consents and goes with him but soon realizes the horrible thing she has done and returns before her husband discovers she has left. The boy recovers his sight so all ends happily.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—6 reels)

Vengeance

Directed by .....*Archie Mayo*
Featuring .....*Jack Holt*, *Dorothy Revier*
Screen story by Ralph Graves

FIVE years in the Congo is quite enough for any man, thinks John Meadham and he demands to be relieved of his post as head of the ivory settlement. The company sends Summers to take his place but Meadham and the two other company representatives are astounded when he brings his lovely wife with him. Summers proves unbearable to both the white men and the natives and it does not take Meadham long to find that the wife shares their feelings. He urges her husband to return with her to civilization and upon his refusal, takes her with him when he starts home. As they travel through the jungle, the other two white men overtake them and urge him to turn back and quiet the natives who have risen against Summers. All the members of the cast give excellent performances making the film entertaining throughout.

For the mature audience.

(Columbia—7 reels)

White Cargo

Directed by .....*J. B. Williams*
Featuring .....*Leslie Faber*
Play by Leon Gordon adapted from novel "Hell's Playground" by Vera Simonton

A FORCEFUL drama of the South Seas showing the white man's struggle against the insidious influence of the tropics. Leaving home, friends and the girl he loves, a young Englishman comes to a lumber camp in the heart of the tropics determined to fight against the rot and decay which he sees all around him and to keep his high ideals. He grimly struggles on until his strength, sapped by the intense heat and his courage and manhood destroyed by the evils surrounding him, he finally gives up the fight and is sent back to England a broken and disillusioned man. The boat that takes him back brings another youth to the merciless tropics full of high hopes and with the determination not to become like the man he sees being carried onto the boat.

For the mature audience.

(Capt. Harold Auten—8 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL

Men Without Women

(See page 8)

For the family audience.

(Fox—8 reels)

Sarah and Son

(See page 9)

For the family audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

The Vagabond King

(See page 10)

For the family audience.

(Paramount—12 reels)

NON-FEATURES

The Doll Shop

At midnight the dolls in a toy shop awake and dance and sing.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Fred Keating

(Vitaphone No. 907)

Interesting feats of magic.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

George Roesner
(Vitaphone No. 910)
Fine characterization of a Northern Civil War veteran.
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review No. 6
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Pathe Review Nos. 4-5
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Sceneries from Norway
Beautiful scenic of Norway.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Rasmus Breistein—1 reel)

MUSICAL SUBJECTS

Charles K. Hackett
(Vitaphone No. 916)
Fine rendition of two Italian songs.
For the family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

George Dewey Washington
(Movietone Act No. A-84)
Builder of dreams.
For the family audience.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Moon Bride's Wedding
Indian song number.
For the family audience.
(Paramount—1 reel)

In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree
Comedy song number of an old favorite tune.
Family audience. Juniors' matinees.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Love's Memories
Mature audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Moran and Challis
(Vitaphone No. 884)
Family audience.
(Warner—1 reel)

Songs of Mother
Family audience. Juniors' matinees.
(Pathe—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

Broadway Folly
(Oswald Cartoon)
Oswald in a musical number.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Universal—1 reel)

The Prisoner's Song
Comedy song number of animals in prison.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Radio Riot
Cartoon sound novelty.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Paramount—1 reel)

BLAZE O'GLORY, a selected picture viewed in this department in the January issue also has been made as a Spanish sound film. This version distributed by Sono Art-World Wide Pictures has had a successful showing in a New York City theatre. When shown to the National Board it was necessary to call upon those of our members who were especially qualified to judge such a picture and the report indicates that this rendition is equally as worthy of merit as the English one. Miss Manuela Alzamora has this to say of it—"I think this picture is well acted and well produced. The masculine rôles are especially worthy of comment. The voices are very clear and distinct. The little boy is splendid, in fact, the best in the cast. José Behr who takes the part of Eddie Williams is very good in the part, he has a pleasant voice and sings well in French, English and Spanish. To me the most striking difference in this and an American picture is in the acting. It is more emotional, not because the actors over-act but because the Latin races are nationally more emotional." The viewing of films in various languages is but one of the many interesting coming phases of the development of sound production. A number of German dialogue pictures are now being exhibited in New York City.

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

offers through its

AFFILIATED BETTER FILMS COMMITTEES

An Opportunity to Promote Better Motion Picture Programs in Your Home Theatre

The Better Films Committee, or Motion Picture Study Club, plan has been found by many committees to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. V, No. 4 April, 1930

John Barrymore and the ladies from the comedy "The Man From Blankley's"
(*see page* 6)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Censorship at Its Worst

The Case of *High Treason*

A SOUND and talking film called *High Treason,* produced in London and imported to this country by one of the large American distributing companies, has been banned from the screen, without public hearing, in the states of Pennsylvania and New York by their respective censorship boards.

In New York the film has been refused license on the ground that it "tends to incite to crime" and "be inhuman". In Pennsylvania it is tabooed under the law that provides for the disapproval of films that are "salacious, obscene, indecent or immoral or tend, in the judgment of the board, to debase or corrupt morals."

And what is the theme of this film so proscribed from public view by the august legal dispensers of screen morals? Strangely enough, the theme is upon the subject of war and peace. Fancifully projected to the year 1940, the picture portrays a situation in which the world is confronted by war on a gigantically destructive scale. The peace forces of the world find themselves in conflict with the militarists. The war council of one federation (for the nations of Europe and of the Western hemisphere have formed coalitions), despite the pleas of the peace advocates on both sides of the Atlantic, has declared for war. This decision is about to be announced over the world television broadcasting system, when the leader of the great peace organization shoots and kills the president of the federation declaring for war, and announces to the world that the decision has been for peace. The war is thus prevented. But the peace leader is tried for murder and convicted in conformity with the law.

Thus *High Treason,* while produced for entertainment, finds its dramatic moment in the triumph of peace and the spirit of international fellowship. It is this film that the state censors in Pennsylvania withhold from the view of the public on the score that it is immoral and tends to corrupt morals, and that the censors in New York State withhold from the view of the public because it tends to incite to crime and be inhuman. The ways of the censor passeth understanding.

The action of these two state censor boards on this film gives the communities of New York and Pennsylvania something to think about. Quite aside from the demerits or merits of *High Treason,* and the latter are by no means meager, either as entertainment or as provoking of earnest thought (for the picture is vivid, well put together, and serious despite its fanciful rendition), the question arises as to whether motion pictures can present for discussion, or use as dramatic material, subjects that the American theory of free speech allows to the drama, the pulpit, the public forum and the press.

The National Board of Review is on the side of a free screen. It has already given a private showing of *High Treason,* which resulted in a protest of a hundred prominent citizens against the action of the Pennsyl-

Scene from the peace film "High Treason"

vania and New York State censorship boards in prohibiting its exhibition.

The National Board is sponsoring a second private showing of the picture to a much larger, and even more representative audience. It has invited a representative of the censorship boards involved in this prohibition to appear and defend the action of that particular legally constituted body for the protection of public morals.

Will he accept its invitation and appear to speak? We shall see.

But whether he does or not, the point is that the repressive action is being called to the attention of the public. By such direct and challenging means on the part of those who believe that censorship is evil, in that it cripples almost hopelessly the power of the screen to deal with important subjects, to stir thought that is worth thinking and emotions that are worth feeling, we choose to think this work of those who sit in cubbyholes under authority of censorship laws, saying what may and may not be seen on the public screen, can be brought into the open in such a manner as to permit the American people to judge whether the institution of legal censorship is worth maintaining.

Since the above was written the second private showing has been held and at that time an audience of over five hundred prominent men and women meeting in Roerich Hall affirmed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The Motion Picture Division of the Educational Department of New York State and the State Board of Censors of Pennsylvania have recently banned the exhibition of the film *High Treason* in their respective states, and

WHEREAS, This action is opposed to that freedom of expression which is necessary in so important a medium as the audible motion picture, and

WHEREAS, Nothing that is presented in the film *High Treason* is in violation of fundamental decency or in contravention of the laws barring indecency in theatrical or other

(*Continued on page* 7)

Pictures and the Public from an Exhibitor's Viewpoint

By Mr. Edward Fay

Manager, Fay's Theatres, Providenc, R. I.

The exhibitor's viewpoint is of utmost importance to those interested in better films work and we were pleased to have it presented to our Conference delegates by Mr. Fay who could so authoritatively treat the subject and we pass it on to a wide audience through these pages. Mr. Fay for the past 15 *years has been connected with the public showing of motion pictures in Providence, and at the present time is operating five theatres exhibiting films there. He was the first theatre manager in New England to install the Vitaphone system for the presentation of talking pictures and was also the first manager to present to Providence audiences, the Magnifiscope or enlarged motion picture screen. At the present time he is President of the Board of Motion Picture Theatre Owners of America having been connected with this organization for* 10 *years or more.— Editor's Note.*

Mr. Edward Fay

THERE has never been any state censorship of motion pictures in Rhode Island but the regulation of films has always been under the supervision of the police department from whom the license is obtained to operate the theatre. The police official assigned to the duty of regulating pictures together with the local theatre managers have always maintained a close cooperation with the National Board of Review and no entertainment film is ever booked for showing in Providence until it has been approved by that body. In this way I have come to know a lot about the work of this organization that has been functioning for the past 21 years.

I believe that theatre managers of Providence are very well satisfied with the present plan of regulation for motion pictures since this plan seems to safeguard the interests of the theatre-going public and to do so with satisfaction to that public.

That the regular motion picture patrons are satisfied with screen entertainment in Providence is borne out by the general lack of complaints on motion pictures received by the Police Department over a period of years.

Disinterested observers of the work of the Police Commission in Providence, exercised through the office of the Police Amusement Inspector, are aware of the very careful consideration given to all complaints by the Commissioners and the Amusement Inspector and further realize the cordial cooperation which the exhibitors in Providence and the film exchanges in Boston give these men in carrying out the recommendations of the National Board of Review.

That the Providence plan has been found effective is strongly indicated by the fact that

(*Continued on page* 7)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

WILTON A. BARRETT

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

The Man from Blankley's

Directed by.....Alfred E. Green
Play by F. Anstey
The Cast
Lord Strathpeffer .....John Barrymore
Margery Seaton .....Loretta Young
Uncle Gabriel Gilwattle.....Albert Gran
Mrs. Tidmarsh .....Emily Fitzroy
Mr. Tidmarsh .....Dick Henderson

THIS delightful and unusual film brings John Barrymore to the screen in the role of the comedian. And it appears to us that his work in *The Man from Blankley's* is the high water mark of his achievement in motion pictures. It is a well nigh faultless piece of work, done with consummate ease, with perfect finesse, with good taste throughout, and with great good humor. No other case of inebriation in screen portrayal quite compares with it. It is unique. And so is the picture.

The story is a little mad, a queer twist away from reality that makes it seem all the more real and funny. You see the situation through the midst of the pleasantly dazed character so riotously portrayed by the art of Mr. Barrymore, and also through the bewildered eyes of the stuffy set at Mrs. Tidmarsh's party. The result is a thoroughly rounded impression of a happening that has all the elements of something that has dropped ridiculously out of the skies. If one ever got into a party like this one at Mrs. Tidmarsh's, and were not the kind of a person that the blank and fatty friends of Mrs. Tidmarsh's are, one would never forget it.

And what is this film, so slight of plot yet so packed with the prickles that set us smiling and laughing, inwardly as well as outwardly, all about? Just this:

Mrs. Tidmarsh, a matron of a pretentious middle-class London circle, is giving a party for Uncle Gabriel and his wife, on whose wealth she and her husband have set eye. Another guest is needed to add to the unlucky number thirteen who are scheduled to arrive. So to Blankley's, a kind of agency that will provide anything from a guest to a teacup to help out hard-pressed hostesses, Mrs. Tidmarsh applies. At the last moment she decides to make up the fourteen by adding to the party the young and charming governess of her infant daughter. A last minute unsuccessful attempt is made to cancel the order for the guest from Blankley's. But in walks a strange, politely regurgitating, and charming mannered young man who, much to Mrs. Tidmarsh's consternation, is taken for the hired addition from Blankley's. The film then turns its attention to the starry drifting of this beverage-light individual through the dense and starchy atmosphere of Mrs. Tidmarsh's company. It seems that he is a real lord, one Strathpeffer, that he had been going to a swanky party in the house next door but had rung at Mrs. Tidmarsh's door by grievous mistake. It also seems that he had met the charming young governess, Miss Seaton, before, had indeed been on the verge of proposing to her, but had left her for a moment to fortify his courage at the hotel bar, and had never returned. This seemingly thoughtless leave-taking Lord Strathpeffer succeeds in explaining to Miss Seaton before the evening is out, with such show of love and contrition that Miss Seaton decides he is the man for her after all. And the last scene of the film shows the elated

couple going out of Mrs. Tidmarsh's front door and down the steps into the basement, where Mrs. Tidmarsh's servants are holding feast and revel, and where Lord Strathpeffer has visited earlier in the evening, the fare being somewhat scanty upstairs. For Miss Seaton has signified to Lord Strathpeffer, following the plighting of their troth, that she is hungry for some good food, and Lord Strathpeffer has told her that he knows just where to go.

This is the pat ending to a thoroughly enchanting film. There is none that has been quite like it. It is comic invention of the highest order. It is something more, for here the motion picture steps forth in an original way into that realm where it can be distinct and startling among the arts, that province where it creates the feeling of phantasmagoria and makes us re-experience the illusive feeling of dream, a feeling that is associated with many of our moments when life has seemed too tragic, or too strange, or too funny to be altogether real.

The Man from Blankley's, with its gallery of ludicrous people, its spectacle of the most ludicrous of them all moving through the scene and striking us as the most understandable, genuine and remarkable one present, and its touch of charm in the befuddled romance of Lord Strathpeffer and Miss Seaton which appears so perfectly veritable and human, takes on a kind of inspired super-elevation, certainly in the field of the comic screen, and even among unusual motion pictures of any description.

Star, director, cast, camera man, and sound engineer must have had a lot of fun making *The Man from Blankley's,* the fun of getting under the skin of nature's noblest creation, ourselves, and finding out what makes us so full of inexplicable antics.

(*Produced and distributed by Warner Bros.*)

(*Continued from page* 4)

exhibitions, with which this film may be properly compared, and

WHEREAS, The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, while taking neither one side nor the other for any propaganda which any given motion picture may contain, believes in the freedom of choice of theme, and

WHEREAS, The National Board of Review has repeatedly declared itself in unequivocal terms as being opposed to the exercise of legal censorship because it is in fundamental conflict with the spirit upon which our government is founded, and because such censorship is a potential weapon of suppression of ideas, thought and speech, and

WHEREAS, Such suppression has actually occurred in the ban placed upon the film *High Treason,* Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That the National Board of Review protests formally and emphatically against the banning of the film *High Treason,* as an act of suppression which is not warranted by the public interests, but which, on the contrary, is opposed to democratic principle, and to the proper development of the motion picture as a medium of expression.

(*Continued from page* 5)

in 1926 the legislature of Rhode Island was willing to permit the Sunday showing of motion pictures on the proviso that films shown on Sunday should be reviewed and approved by the National Board, and the general satisfaction which the Sunday exhibition of pictures has given is further proof that the whole scheme of regulating motion pictures is a sound and adequate one.

The reason the service of the National Board of Review is acceptable, from the exhibitor's standpoint, to the theatre managers and, more important still, to the public itself, is the fact that the theatre managers realize that the Board's decisions are group decisions of disinterested volunteers, trained in the task of reflecting in their judgment decent public opinion with due regard to the amusement needs of the public. The groups of the National Board are impartial observers of public opinion and have no axe to grind, and review films, not from any particular club standard, but from the point of view of a group genuinely interested in the public mind, itself composed of members of all creeds and denominations and of many interests.

This being the case, it goes without saying that the theatre manager places a reliance not only on the National Board's passport of films, but on the Board's selections of what it considers the finer films together with audience suitability classification of these. The exhibitor believes that the Board's lists are a real guide since they are based on the study of the reaction to motion pictures of the public.

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

THE Executive Board of the Better Films National Council was greatly pleased to accept at its March meeting the applications of three groups for affiliated committee membership in the Council. The newly affiliated groups are the Rochester (N. Y.) Better Films Council, the Westwood (N. J.) Better Films Committee and the Ridgefield Park-Bogota-Teaneck (N. J.) Community Motion Picture Council. These Committees are all the culmination of effective and enthusiastic better films work in the community and each one proves the oft repeated statement that the interest of any one organization can lead to the formation of an organized group representing many interests of the locality. The starting points of interest in these three committees were in three different organizations, in one a D. A. R. Chapter, in another a Women's Club and in the third a Parent-Teacher group, but each has seen the value of enlarging and combining the work of motion picture interests of many organizations into one constructive community committee. Contacts made with these groups in their days of formation have been strengthened by this affiliation and the Council offers congratulations upon the success in carrying the Committees so far and good wishes for their future achievements.

MISS CAROLINE GENTRY, Director of Films of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, has accepted membership on the Council of the Better Films National Council. Miss Gentry's outstanding piece of work in the film field, that of collecting practically every foot of film regarding President Roosevelt and arranging and editing it, has been recognized by the National Board for some time and it will be a pleasure to have this closer contact through membership. In her letter of acceptance Miss Gentry says, "Will you please tell me how I can serve your good cause, for by attending the National Conferences of the Board for the last three years I am already deeply in your debt. Your organization has been of great assistance to us in our work here at Roosevelt House where we have found the usual problems of pioneers in a new field, and your advice and encouragement has confirmed my belief in the importance of preserving the historical film." It was gratifying to hear that the National Board had been of service to the motion picture activity of the Roosevelt Memorial Association and the relationship has been one of mutual help in many ways. The hospitality of Roosevelt House has been offered for the use of the National Board's conference guests for the past two years. Mrs. Douglas Robinson, Theodore Roosevelt's sister, has received the guests and several Roosevelt films have been exhibited for the pleasure and profit of the guests. These Conference presentations have led to an interest in showing the films in various communities and in visits from those nearby to Roosevelt House. One community as a result plans to make a visit to Roosevelt House a part of the graduation exercises of its High School.

THE Motion Picture Department of the Three Arts League of Columbus (Ga.) has recently come under the leadership of Mrs. Robert M. Lewis. Mrs. William de L. Worsley, president of the League, writes that Mrs. Lewis will make an excellent leader and that plans for additional activity are to be considered. The Motion Picture Department emphasizes the better pictures which it wishes to bring to the attention of the interested public in a very effective way. Comments are placed, Mrs. Worsley reports, on a flashboard in a conspicuous window on Main Street. Pictures are discussed at the meetings and duplicates of the ballots registering the reactions of the Committee members upon the various pictures are sent to the National Board. The children's matinees of the city are sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Association. An invitation showing of some unusual film may be put on in the near future as this phase of the better films work is of particular interest to the Three Arts League.

MRS. WILLIAM H. POUCH, Better Films Chairman of the Northern Division of the National D. A. R. Society and New York State Chairman, contributes increasing help and inspiration to her Better Films Chairmen. Early in the year she arranged at Town Hall in New York City, a luncheon and meeting for the first and second District Regents and Chairmen. Over three hundred members attended. Seated with Mrs. Pouch at the luncheon table were twenty-five Better Films Chairmen. A discussion of activities showed that many of the Chairmen are being successful in planning with their theatre managers for children's matinees and many have purchased patriotic trailers to be given or loaned to their neighborhood theatres for showings on patriotic holidays.

Mrs. Pouch and many of her associates attended the National Board Conference and Luncheon and this has resulted in a number of very pleasant and worth while contacts.

The February meeting of Chapter Chairmen was held at the home of Mrs. Pouch. At this meeting Miss Edith Ford, who is the New Netherlands Chapter Better Films Chairman, was appointed Chairman of a Reviewing Committee of the First District and vicinity. All Better Films Chairmen of Greater New York are asked to work with Miss Ford in contributing to the Bulletin of Pictures.

Motion picture interest being but one of many activities of Mrs. Pouch she takes occasion to combine it with others. A luncheon meeting of the Richmond County Chapter, D. A. R., of which she is regent was delightfully carried out. It was held in the Seamen's Institute and Dr. A. R. Mansfield, the Director of the Institute told of this most worth while work which is giving to the Merchant Marine of all nations a New York home. An opportunity was offered to those assembled to view the splendid edifice in which this fine work is conducted so that the circle of friends for the work of the Institute was increased and an enjoyable afternoon spent. Following the luncheon Mrs. Pouch entertained the guests with a showing of the Lady Hamilton film entitled *The Divine Lady* in the auditorium of the Institute.

Many different ways of accomplishing worthy results are used by the various Chapter Chairman working under Mrs. Pouch. The Mary Washington Colonial Chapter of which Miss Blanche Spadone is Chairman sponsored a special matinee at the Little Picture Theatre in New York City, the feature film being *Seven Days' Leave*. Miss Spadone reported a most gratifying result from the matinee, the house being entirely sold out. The proceeds were for the purpose of furthering the Better Films work in showing films in hospitals, to crippled children and shut-ins. Much work of this kind is being done by the D. A. R. chapters, they are not only providing films but hand projectors to be used at the bedsides of those unable to go to the auditorium.

THE Rochester (N. Y.) Better Films Council was started with an organization meeting on February 7th which was followed by frequent meetings essential to the work of formation. A meeting of a sub-committee for the planning of a working program was held on February 18th. At the second open meeting for those interested in taking part in the work of a Council thirty-two were present representing the Board of Education, the Y. M. C. A., Federation of Churches, Chamber of Commerce, the D. A. R. Society, Poetry Society, College Women's Club, Parent-Teacher Association, University of Rochester, Women's City Club, City Normal School, newspaper critics and the managers of the local motion picture theatres. Mrs. Hugh A. Smith, Jr., who has through her enthusiasm and interest been the one responsible for this fine show of interest, introduced Dr. William E. Weld of the University of Rochester, who presided. The subjects of special programs for children, press reviews, the showing of "selected pictures" and the bringing of them before the public were discussed. Mrs. Smith told of the work of the National Board and of how the Council came to be organized. As stated elsewhere in this department the Council is now an affiliated committee of the Better Films National Council of the National Board. Plans for cooperation with the local theatre managers for publicity and for other effective ways of carrying forward the work are under advisement and fine achievements are to be expected from this Council functioning in a city that is such a center of motion picture interest. Mrs. Smith is the chairman of the Council and Mrs. A. E. Babcock is the secretary.

MUSIC and motion picture tie-ups are of especial interest now to Better Films Committees with sound having such an important part in films. The Music Week plans for 1929 which were so effectively used by Mrs. Mina Church Brann, Motion Picture Chairman of the Montgomery County Maryland Federation of Women's Clubs, contain very helpful ideas. The idea worked out in the Suggested Program for Music Week was entitled "A Cycle of Music" and united various interests with the Chairmen of the departments of the club handling the different themes. The subjects and departments were as follows:

Music in the Woods and Tree-tops—Chairman of Conservation

Music in the Home—Teacher and Homemaker

Music in the School—School Music Teacher

Music in the Church—Church Worker and Musician

Music in the Hospital and other Institutions—Chairman of Hospital Work and County Drama Chairman

Music in the Theatre—Chairman of Fine Arts

Music in the Motion Picture Theatre—Chairman of Motion Pictures

Folk Songs a National Impulse—Chairman of International Relations

The Radio and its Influence on Universal Music Appreciation

In Mrs. Brann's local theatre at Bethesda, Maryland, during Music Week the Theatre Program carried the following announcement on the cover—

THIS IS MUSIC WEEK

In cooperation with Mrs. Mina Church Brann, Chairman, Motion Picture Department, Women's Club of Bethesda, a short recital will be given daily at 8:00 and 9:30 P. M. Program changed daily.

The programs included for the six days, "Scarf Dance," by Chaminade, Tschaikowsky's "One Who Has Yearned Alone", Brahm's "Waltz in A", "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life" by Herbert, "My Heart Opens at Thy Sweet Voice" by Saint Saens, "Rondino" by Kreisler, "Once Again, I Would Gaze On Thy Beauty" by Gounod, Moszkowski's "Serenata", "To a Water Lily" by McDowell, Mascagni's Intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana", Mendelssohn's "On Wings of Song" and "Moment Musical" by Schubert.

A recent report from the Maryland News, regarding Mrs. Brann's work says, "A meeting of the motion picture committee of the Montgomery County Federation of Women's Clubs was held in the club room of the Chestnut Farms Dairy on Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda. This meeting was perhaps the most hopeful sign of a successful future for the better films movement yet observed by the faithful group who have been sponsoring it under the untiring leadership of the county chairman, Mrs. Mina Church Brann during the past three years. Mrs. Brann presided at this meeting, Miss Estelle Moore, president of the county federation, was present, as were representatve women from the clubs large and small in all parts of the county. For the first time in the history of the local movement a group of very earnest club women and delegates from other organized groups met with managers and exhibitors of county picture houses to discuss the problems and difficulties that must be surmounted in order to bring about a high class of film showings, especially on Fridays and Saturdays, when children are present in large numbers. The managers of the Bethesda, Chevy Chase and Takoma Park Theatres were among the speakers, and convinced their audience of their wish to cooperate with the women who are demanding constantly improved standards. It is believed by those who are devoted to the solving of this vital community problem that long strides were taken at this March meeting toward the higher plane of understanding and achievement greatly to be desired."

CHARLOTTE, N. C., people interested in better films were reminded of the importance of educating the public toward the appreciation of the finer pictures in an address by the Rev. William Murdock McLeod at a luncheon given by the Better Films Committee of Charlotte. Rev. Mr. McLeod, who has been prominent in work in the better films movement, declared that members of the clergy should take more interest in moving pictures and stress their importance. He spoke against censorship of pictures, stating that public appreciation of the really good pictures could be depended upon to solve the problem.

A recent advertisement for a Juniors' Matinee in this southern city shows the understanding ways of the Committee in bringing to the attention of the children a picture the title of which was not particularly appealing to them. It reads:

"Richard Dix in *The Love Doctor* is the feature picture for your junior matinee next Saturday morning. Now, of course, you aren't in the least keen about what you call "just love pictures" but you are pretty certain to like this one, for they say it is full of laughs, some of 'em "heart-y" laughs, it is true, but good healthy laughs at that. So don't miss *The Love Doctor* for anything. Be on hand at the Imperial Theatre at 10 A.M. next Saturday. And doubtless you are remembering to tell the grown-ups who are there and the manager of the theatre if you see him, how much you like the picture. How else will the Better Films Committee and the theatre management know what sort of pictures to plan for your amusement."

THE Motion Picture Study Club of Oneonta (N. Y.), an affiliated committee of the National Board of Review, has on its membership many of the outstanding citizens of the community representing educational, religious and civic interests. The new officers of the group include Mrs. Frank Shutts, Board of Education, president; Mrs. Lee Hamilton, Normal Extension Class in Parental Education, vice-president; Mrs. William Hoyt, Methodist Church, secretary; Mrs. Eber Hix, Mother's Club, Main Street Baptist Church, treasurer, and Mrs. Ray Champlin, Normal Extension Class, corresponding secretary. Other membership organizations in the Club besides those represented by the officers are the D. A. R., Family Social Work Association, Girl Scouts, Catholic Daughters of America, Lutheran Church, Presbyterian Church, Oneonta Women's Club, St. James Episcopal Church, Hartwick College and the Order of the Eastern Star. The local theatre manager is also a cooperating member.

This active Committee concluded a research recently based upon the selected pictures of the National Board. The results of this study are indicative of the fact that the activities of an organized better films committee are instrumental in bringing a larger percentage of the selected, or worth while films, to the theatres of a community. The increased percentage of films for children is also worthy of note. The study is as follows:

ONEONTA MOTION PICTURE STUDY CLUB

Sponsored by State Normal Extension Class in Parental Education
Oneonta, New York

This Study was made during the three months of November and December, 1929 and January, 1930.

Theatres studied were located in towns near Oneonta which do not have Motion Picture Study Clubs. All were under one management.

64% of the Selected Pictures shown in these towns had been shown in Oneonta at a previous date.

Oneonta Theatres		*6 Other Theatres*
84%	....Selected Films....	73%
	of these	
70%	..For Young People..	71%
25%	....For Children....	15%
5%	.For Mature Audience.	14%
6	...Exceptional Films...	1
	DATE OF RELEASE	
100%	..After June 1, 1929...	62%
	Jan. 1929-June 1929.	20%
	During 1928	16%
	During 1927	2%
	Total more than 5 months old.....	38%

A more recent study states:

This Study covers the photoplays shown in our local theatres during February and March, 1930.

100% *Guides to Better Films* were published on Feb. 10th and March 17th.

2 *Exceptional Photoplays* were shown during the two months.

77% of the Photoplays were "Better Films"

Of these selected films
61% were for the family audience
18% were suitable for children
79%
21% were for the mature audience

A picture suitable for children or the family audience was shown in at least one theatre on every Saturday afternoon during the two months.

THE Westchester (N. Y.) County Recreation Commission early in the year in an effort to ascertain whether the people of Westchester County desired supervised motion picture entertainment for their children sent a questionnaire to women's clubs, child study groups and school superintendents and principals throughout the county. Mrs. Marguerite E. Schwarzman had charge of the plan for the Commission. In asking individuals and organizations for their opinions, Mrs. Schwarzman requested replies by February 10th. The questionnaire stated: "Should the community be interested and willing to cooperate, such programs might be planned for the Saturday mornings of March and April in some appropriate auditorium in White Plains. The price would possibly be as low as ten cents." The information which the Commission sought is outlined in the following questions:

1. Would the parents in your community wish such performances for their children?
2. How many children do you estimate might attend from your community?
3. To make these performances available for the under-privileged children of the communities, transportation will need to be arranged. Could you secure a local bus or private cars to transport such children?

The Commission endeavored to enlist the cooperation of club women by asking clubs to appoint two members a month to act as chaperones for the children. As a result of the questionnaire the Children's Film Committee of White Plains, N. Y., was organized during the latter part of February and immediately made plans to hold three performances, on March 15th, 22nd and 29th, at 10:30 A. M. Upon the attendance at these performances plans for next season depended, as also the start of such work in other communities. The R. K. O. Theatre in White Plains has been donated for the purpose. Mrs. Leslie B. Gille, of the Better Films Committee of the White Plains Chapter, D. A. R., is general chairman of the new group. Other prominent committee and club women throughout the county are represented on the committee. Through their organizations the committee will build up its attendance for these performances. It is planned to present a program including a feature picture, a comedy and an educational reel.

The National Board staff was happy to be called upon to give help in initiating this new work of the Westchester County Recreation Commission which has done such outstanding social work for the community in many fields. Mrs. Schwarzman and the members of her committee have reported the National Board's list of selected pictures most helpful in planning their programs.

THE MARCH OF THE MOVIES, the National Board's historical film, traveled to Boston for exhibition on March 22nd. The Boston Transcript has the following to say of the showing: "A truly autobiographical (or perhaps one should say autobiotical or autobioscopic) record of the development of the movies from 1895 to 1927 was presented at the Museum of Fine Arts by the Artkino Guild for the friends and members of the Alumni Association of the School of the Museum. Nearly two hundred persons saw the film, which gives brief shots of characteristic pictures from the earliest flicker-flicker days to the present. To one who has followed the movies for any number of years, this strictly educational picture, however jerkily pieced together, is more fascinating than the latest thriller. First it shows early devices: the "wheel of life", and galloping horses photographed at Muybridge; peep show arcades, such as we still have in Scollay Square, and a typical turn-the-crank melodrama, *The Beheading of Mary, Queen of Scots;* the mutuscope booklet which came to life when rapidly thumbed; and the first Kinetoscope. *The Charge of the Dragoons,* filmed in 1896, is shown in comparison with a more recent version of a charge in *The Ten Commandments.* Early repertorial shots follow: of Victoria's jubilee parade, the steam elevated train in the Bowery in 1895, a "fast" express at every window of which ladies and gentlemen now wave pocket handkerchiefs, Cleveland and McKinley in a hack, Roosevelt wearing a funny bowler and walking so fast the camera cannot keep up with him. Then the Pathe newsreels—King George and Kaiser Wilhelm friendly the year before the war, Pershing's punitive expedition, the burning of Smyrna in 1922 (perhaps the best news shots ever made). Various attempts at color work are shown, from Prisma through Kelleycolor to modern Technicolor.

THE Juniors' Matinees of Macon (Ga.) which are always unusually interesting and ingenious, have not fallen below this standard, as will be proven by a brief summary of some of the latest ones. In cooperation with the Macon History Club the Better Films Committee presented a pageant in connection with the matinee on Georgia Day. This interesting prologue depicting the history of the flags and seals of Georgia was written and produced by the versatile president of the Committee, Mrs. Piercy Chestney. Several years of research were spent in making this pageant authentic in every way and it will probably have a permanent value in the state historical records.

A matinee serving a two-fold purpose was held when the independence of Cuba was celebrated together with the birth of Robert Burns. For the former the singing of the Cuban national anthem was featured and each child was presented with a Cuban flag. The celebration of Burns' anniversary was marked by an organ medley of Scottish airs, a Scotch dance in costume and the presentation of a book of Burns' poems as attendance prize. The feature picture for this occasion was *The Duke Steps Out* and the honor guests were the veterans of the Spanish-American War. The prologue for the Valentine Day matinee had a great appeal to the smaller children as it consisted of an unique Mother Goose Valentine story under the direction of Mrs. Malcolm Jones, Jr., of the Department of Expression, Wesleyan Conservatory. The monologue explained how "My son John" gave "Miss Muffett" a real Valentine and some of the characters represented by the children were "Dumpling, my son John", "Miss Muffett", "Boy Blue", "Bo-peep", "Peter, the Pumpkin Eater and his wife", "Jack and Jill", "Cinderella", "Mistress Mary" and many others. The picture part of the program was well taken care of by the feature *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* with a short educational subject *Time*.

A novel entertainment in the way of matinees was the one held celebrating the 318th anniversary of the wedding of Pocahontas and John Rolfe to which the twenty-four direct descendents of these two historical characters were invited as honor guests. The picture chosen for this occasion was most appropriately *Jamestown* of the Yale Chronicles of America series, the first attempt ever made to put into comprehensive sequence the picturized story of any country, which depicts the courtship and marriage of Pocahontas and John Rolfe, the life in Jamestown, and all the people prominently connected with its history, Powhatan, John Smith, Sir Thomas Dale and others. Added to this feature picture was a most entertaining pantomime-tableau of the wedding enacted by talented youngsters of Macon. The children acting as ushers were dressed in Indian costumes and the attendance prize was $5 to the school that had the highest percentage of attendance at the matinee. The 150th anniversary of the chartering of the first American bank was the incentive for an attendance prize of a bank account at another special performance. Among the feature pictures shown at recent matinees were *Lonesome, Illusion, The Rainbow Man* and *The Texas Cowboy*. As usual most interesting prologues rounded out these programs together with newsreels, comedies and educational short subjects.

The Better Films Committee carried on a most comprehensive campaign in sponsoring the picture *Disraeli* in Macon. A report from the president says, "As soon as it was announced that *Disraeli* had been booked definitely for Macon, the Better Films Committee began a campaign looking toward the success of the local showing. Some of the methods used were:

1. The Committee, in addition to twenty-one active members, has a large number of associate members, each of whom was instructed to announce to his own organization the coming of the picture, to ask that each member of that organization attend and ask others to do so and give as much publicity as possible to the screening.

2. The active members made the announcements to the other 200 organizations—religious, civic, education, fraternal, social and so forth, and through the influence of others, outside the Committee, the news was very generally broadcast.

3. The organist for the Saturday morning matinees, who is musical director of the local broadcasting station, announced the picture.

4. Copies of the story of the play were sent to the history teachers of the two high schools,

Mercer University, Wesleyan Conservatory and the upper grades in the grammar schools. The story was read to the classes and the students given credit for attendance.

5. The manager of the theatre consented to allow groups of fifty students to attend the afternoon shows for 25 cents each and the night shows for 35 cents. In one of the high schools 200 were influenced by the teachers to attend.

6. The theatre gave 1000 folder announcements to the Committee. Five hundred of these were distributed by active members to groups and individuals the Committee felt would be interested. On the back of the other five hundred the Committee typed the list of books in the Washington Memorial Library bearing on the period of history covered by the picture, and the library used them as bookmarks, placing them in books being taken out by persons who would be interested in such a picture.

7. The two city libraries—Washington Memorial and Price Free Library—the libraries of Wesleyan, Mercer and the Conservatory made displays of "stills" from the picture and books bearing on the subject. The Washington Memorial secured from the state library commission books on the subject to add to its own collection. All books in the display went out at once and all are still out, wth indication, says the librarian, that they will be moving for weeks to come. The Price library makes the same report.

8. The book store in the city ordered a number of copies of "Disraeli" and with them the publishers sent a number of "stills" from the picture. One window of the store was given over entirely to a "Disraeli" display.

9. The treasurer of the Committee, who is motion picture chairman of the Sixth District Federation of Women's Clubs, sent out a letter to every club in the district.

10. The president of the Committee, who is motion picture chairman of the Sixth District P.-T. A., sent an announcement to every association in the district.

11. In many of the churches the announcement was made and the teachers of Sunday School clasess urged their members to attend and to commend the resident manager for bringing to the city such a picture. This was done at the request of the Committee.

12. In addition to straight newspaper announcements, all the reports in the papers of club meetings, etc., carried the statement that at the meeting of such and such an organization a representative of the Better Films Committee had announced the coming of *Disraeli,* and the theatre editors of each paper so wrote the headlines of even the paid advertisements that the name, Disraeli, was the most prominent word in them.

13. The picture is booked for a return engagement and the same campaign with additional features will be used.

These are ideas that can be exploited for other pictures of this type.

The Vagabond King made its premiere performance in Macon under the auspices of the Better Films Committee. Members of Macon society and the nearby towns attended and formed many theatre parties. The audience was filmed on entering the theatre in the manner of the Hollywood openings and the pictures will be shown later at the theatre.

THE Cleveland (Ohio) Cinema Club sponsored a special invitation showing of the outstanding film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* on March 19th. This picture was made available through the gracious courtesy of Ufa Films, the producer, and American and Foreign Productions, the distributor. Word from Cleveland reports the showing as very successful and so great was the interest aroused by this unusual film that it is to be discussed at the next meeting of the club. Questionnaires gathering audience judgment were provided as is the usual procedure at the exhibition of such films by affiliated committees, following the plan initiated by the National Board at special showings of certain exceptional pictures. From the few sample ballots sent to us this picture was characterized as "imaginative," "fantastic," "as quite exceptional" and "as marking an advance in the art of the photodrama." Among the organizations in addition to the Cinema Club represented at this showing were the Lakewood Women's Club, Lakewood Parent-Teacher Association, North Olmstead Women's Club, Bay Village Women's Club and the East Cleveland Women's Club.

THE increasing understanding and good will existing between wide awake committees and their exhibitors was clearly evidenced at the largely attended monthly luncheon meeting of the Atlanta (Ga.) Better Films Committee, at which time a number of speakers evinced appreciation of the methods of the committee. Better films secured through co-operation without censorship, which is the working law of the Atlanta Committee, was praised by Earle Griggs, exploitation director for Universal Pictures, Lindy Coons, representing the Georgia Theatre; Alpha Fowler, manager of the Empire Theatre; Manager Adams, of the Palace Theatre and Manager Thomson of the West End Theatre, all of whom took part in the program. Following the general program, the meeting was turned over to Mrs. W. F. Trenary, chairman of the community theatre groups, for whom the luncheon had been named, "Neighborhood Night". The chairmen of this group made two-minute talks and introduced their theatre managers. Mr. Fowler, representing all the community managers, voiced their opinion when he said the four steps in securing better films were, first, education; second, interest; third, energy; and last and very important, a neighborly attitude. These principles followed by the neighborhood groups are succeeding in creating better films programs. The Palace group were hostesses to a party of 100 little children from the Home for the Friendless and the Southern Christian Home and the Ponce de Leon group are planning a party for the crippled children from the Scottish Rite hospital in the near future. An invitation was read from the Fox Theatre manager inviting the Committee to visit "back stage" and was enthusiastically accepted, and a letter from the manager of another theatre asked the Committee's support of the Martin Johnson film of African exploration, *Across the World,* in which appears Atlanta's Scout, Douglas Oliver. A letter was read from the Capital's manager thanking the Committee for their appreciation of his efforts to present wholesome and interesting programs. A letter of approbation was received from Carl Laemmle, president of Universal Flms. This remarkable co-operation between exhibitors and a better films committee should be a great incentive to other committees. Mrs. Newton C. Wing, the competent president, asked her members to plan to be present at the attendance party of *The Rogue Song* to lend encouragement by their presence at the showing of the best films. *Peter Pan,* the ever popular fairy tale, and *Little Lord Fauntleroy,* Frances Hodgson Burnett's story of childhood, were the latest Junior Matinee presentations. With so much emphasis on Juniors' Matinees it will be interesting perhaps for Better Films Committees to read of certain matinees held under the auspices of the Atlanta neighborhood groups. Through the courtesy of the West End Theatre manager, this group of the Committee held a special performance for the ladies of the West End Old Ladies Home and their enjoyment was most gratifying. Another neighborhood group of the Committee held a matinee for the old gentlemen of the Confederate Home which likewise was highly successful.

THE New York State Federation of Music Clubs devoted some time and interest to motion pictures at the recent state meeting in Rochester, New York. Mrs. E. H. Cahill, Chairman of Motion Pictures of the National Federation, after consulting with the N. Y. State President regarding a plan which she had in mind for the carrying out of the motion picture work of the Federation, expressed to the staff of the National Board her desire to have the possibility of the use of films in the study programs of the Music Clubs Federation introduced at this meeting. Two films were made available to her for the presentation of this idea through the helpful cooperation of Fitzpatrick Pictures. The films shown were from the Famous Music Makers Series—the Schubert and the Stephen Foster pictures. The exhibition of these films as a part of the conference program at the Sagamore Hotel met with great enthusiasm. Other plans for the establishment and increase of this phase of Music Federation activity are being worked out by Mrs. Cahill.

THE movie can never do the drama's work as effectively as the drama can, any more than dancing, even Pavlowa's, can, for all its trying, interpret music. The two are as intrinsically different as black and white. The movie must tell not the drama's stories in the drama's way, but its own stories in its own way. —George Jean Nathan.

"WE cannot accomplish a good moral end by voting at our clubs to bring this or that excellent opera, drama or motion picture to town, and then go to the theatres showing the plays we condemn. We cannot pack the theatres showing the near-raw and suggestive play and on next week allow the manager of a theatre to hold the empty bag when he shows the better films or better drama. The real solution to better films is along the pathway of better home life, better religious life, better cultural life, better social life. When more people can resist the allurement of a sex picture, or a 'Thrilling Night in Oolala,' and can pass by the box office and walk into another theatre showing a better grade film, we will get better films."—William R. Duffey, Director, School of Speech, Marquette University.

PRESIDENT HOOVER, despite the improvement in the talking motion picture, is more impressed with the newsreels, which give him a picture of things in the making. Films of mystery stories are also the President's liking, but he does not warm up to the talkies because "they demand too close attention." Sound movies have been installed in the White House and the pictures are shown on Monday and Thursday nights.

THE Motion Picture Committee of the American Library Association continues to sponsor those films which it considers worthy of special attention and which have a distinct book tie-up value. Miss Marilla W. Freeman, Librarian of the Cleveland Main Library and Secretary of the Committee, sends us a copy of the bookmark for the picture, *Anna Christie*. This bookmark, Miss Freeman writes, "was prepared by the Cleveland Public Library at the request of the exhibitor and at his expense. Any of your club or committee members who wish may reprint it as a whole or in part." Miss Freeman reports that Miss Gladys Caldwell, Chairman of the Committee, says of *Anna Christie*: "The picture triumphs over the stage production in its epic quality, due partly to the mysterious photographs of the sea and the fog, and partly to Greta Garbo's superb acting." We are happy to pass on this helpful cooperating suggestion to our better films committees.

ANNA CHRISTIE

"Children of the Mysterious Sea"

Books suggested by the Photoplay

Ask for them at

(name of Library)

THE CALL OF THE SEA (DRAMA)

"I have lent myself to thy will, O sea.
My soul to the lure of thy mystery."
C. W. Stork

O'Neill—ANNA CHRISTIE
O'Neill—BOUND EAST FOR CARDIFF
O'Neill—ILE
Berrisford—THE ONE ETERNAL THING
Clements—SEA PLAYS
Ibsen—THE LADY FROM THE SEA

SEAS AND HARBORS (STORIES)

"I remember the black wharves and the slips
And the Sea-tide tossing free."
—Longfellow

Bone—THE BRASSBOUNDER
Bone—BROKEN STOWAGE
Burke—LIMEHOUSE NIGHTS
Connolly—CRESTED SEAS
Jesse—TOM FOOL
McFee—CASUALS OF THE SEA
Poole—THE HARBOR

SAILOR SONGS

"I must go down to the sea again,
To the lonely sea and the sky."
—Masefield

Fox-Smith—SAILOR TOWN
Fox-Smith—SEA SONGS AND BALLADS
Lee—LURE OF THE SEA
Masefield—DAUBER
Masefield—SALT WATER POEMS AND BALLADS

Printed by the courtesy of the
(name of theatre)
presenting
GRETA GARBO
in
"ANNA CHRISTIE"
100% ALL TALKING

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

FRANCES C. BARRETT
HELEN CAHILL

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience. *Pictures recommended for the family audience* (12 *years up*).

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience* (18 *years up*).

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays".*

Alias French Gertie

Directed by ..... *George Archainbaud*
Featuring ..... *Bebe Daniels, Ben Lyon*
Play "The Chatterbox" by Bayard Veiller

USUALLY in the movies, when a pair of crooks reform, everything turns out rosy for them. Not so here. Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon play the two crooks in question who decide to get married and go straight. The girl has been very successful in posing as a French maid, gaining the confidence of her employers and then walking off with their jewels. Her boy friend works wonders with safes. They give up these highly profitable pursuits and begin to make an honest living when they get a strong dose of their own medicine. The poor fellow is rather disillusioned and the girl has to take drastic action to keep him on the straight and narrow. Bebe Daniels gives a fine performance as French Gertie and she is ably supported by Ben Lyon and Robert Emmett O'Connor in the part of the sympathetic detective.

For the mature audience.

(R K O—7 reels)

The Benson Murder Case

Directed by ..... *Frank Tuttle*
Featuring ..... *William Powell*
Novel by S. S. Van Dine

WHO killed Anthony Benson, the Wall Street broker? There are five persons suspected—two men and three women, all of whom Benson had ruined in the stock market. The case is most puzzling and it finally takes the suave Philo Vance to unravel the mystery and bring the criminal to justice. A highly entertaining picture.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—7 reels)

Captain of the Guard

Directed by ..... *John S. Robertson*
Featuring ..... *Laura La Plante, John Boles*
Screen story by Houston Branch

A STORY of the French rebellion based upon the composing of the French national anthem, "La Marseillaise." Forced to leave the girl he loves to enter the King's Guards, a young man who was formerly a music teacher is sent to capture a girl known as "The Torch" who is leading the revolutionists. To his amazement he discovers who the girl is and they are cast into prison and it is there he writes "La Marsellaise". John Boles singing is excellent as usual.

For the family audience.

(Universal—9 reels)

Crazy That Way

Directed by ..... *Hamilton MacFadden*
Featuring ..... *Joan Bennett*

Play "In Love With Love" by Vincent Lawrence

HERE is a story as crazy as the title indicates but made entertaining by its brisk pace, the presence of the lovely Joan Bennett and the acting of Regis Toomey. The heroine of this tale is not given a moment of peace by her fiance and another boy who is determined to win her from his rival. Wherever the engaged couple go, the disappointed suitor is sure to be there. At last the girl becomes thoroughly exasperated by the constant presence and wrangling of both boys, all the more so because of her interest in her father's friend who seems annoyingly oblivious to her charms. Things come to a head when the two boys almost wreck her garden one afternoon in a ridiculous fight and when they return a big surprise awaits them.

For the family audience.

(Fox—6 reels)

The Feminine Touch

Directed by ..... *Richard Thorpe*
Featuring ..... *Richard Thorpe*, *Lina Basquette*

Story "The Dude Wrangler" by Caroline Lockhart

RIDICULED for his feminine ways a boy goes to the wild and wooly West to make a man of himself. There he starts a dude ranch for the purpose of giving tenderfeet a thrill and one day in the act of saving one of his middle-aged boarders he proves his mettle.

For the family audience.

(Sono Art—World Wide—7 reels)

He Knew Women

Directed by ..... *Hugh Herbert*
Featuring ..... *Lowell Sherman*

Play by S. N. Behrman

FOR those who enjoy stage adaptations of a light sophisticated vein *He Knew Women* will be enjoyed. It concerns the entanglements in the love affairs of four people during a short period of time. The cast with the suave Lowell Sherman in the title role are well suited to their respective characters.

For the mature audience.

(R K O—7 reels)

High Society Blues

Directed by ..... *David Butler*
Featuring ..... *Janet Gaynor*, *Charles Farrell*

Story by Dana Burnett

A MUSICAL romance with the popular and versatile Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell. A man, after selling his business in the West, moves East and buys a mansion in a wealthy and snobbish colony. His next door neighbor is the one with whom he made the business transaction but he is soon made to see that that is as far as their relations go. But love steps in and complications arise. Very entertaining picture.

For the family audience.

(Fox—10 reels)

Khas-Poosh

AN interesting picture showing the condition of Persia at the time the British were given the tobacco monoply. This action on the part of the Shah brings great dissatisfaction to his subjects and later rebellion and famine when the Russians refuse them wheat. The half-starved, half-crazed Persians flee to the city of Tehuran where the men organize into a band called the Khas-Poosh to overcome the Shah.

For the mature audience.

(American Committee to Aid Armenia—7 reels)

Ladies of Leisure

Directed by ..... *Frank Capra*
Featuring ..... *Barbara Stanwick*, *Ralph Graves*

Play by Milton Herbert Gropper

DRAMA of reformation. A girl who has been a professional entertainer becomes the model for a young artist and before long they are very much in love. On the eve of their elopement his wealthy mother comes to her and begs her to give him up, she promises to and sails for Cuba immediately, but love seems to be not so easy to escape and they are happily reunited.

For the mature audience.

(Columbia—10 reels)

Mamba

Directed by ..... *Al Rogell*
Featuring ..... *Jean Hersholt*, *Eleanor Boardman*, *Ralph Forbes*
Story by F. Schuman-Heink and John Reinhardt

DRAMA of Africa. A wealthy but boorish German brings his beautiful young wife to the African country where his bestiality soon estranges the girl. The World War breaks out and the friendly relations between the soldiers are severed. The girl leaves her husband and goes to the fort to help where a young German officer whom she met on the boat coming out is stationed. Through a revolt of the natives against the cruelty of her husband happiness is brought to the young wife. The picture is named "Mamba" because the natives have nick-named August Bolte, the husband, that after a poisonous snake found in East Africa. The entire production is done in technicolor and is most effective. The acting of both Jean Hersholt and Ralph Forbes is excellent.

For the mature audience.

(Tiffany—9 reels)

Mammy

Directed by ..... *Michael Curtiz*
Featuring ..... *Al Jolson*
Screen story by L. G. Rigby

A MUSICAL drama featuring Al Jolson and Irving Berlin's music. Al Fuller, the end man in the Meadow's Merry Minstrels, is in love with the owner's daughter who is betrothed to the master of ceremonies. The villain enters the plot and succeeds in getting Al in a rather serious predicament but after escaping and going home to his mother he comes back, gives himself up and all ends well.

For the family audience.

(Warner—8 reels)

Der Meistersinger

Directed by ..... *Ludwig Berger*

A GERMAN production based upon the opera of the same name. In romantic old Nuremberg a young girl is being forced into marriage by her father with an elderly man but she is interested in the local bootmaker and throws herself on his mercy. A boy in the same predicament as Eva comes to Nuremberg incognito and the young couple fall in love. It is finally decreed that the man who writes the best poem will be her husband and in the contest the bootmaker is the lucky one but he sacrifices his love for the happiness of the girl and boy.

For the mature audience.

(Moviegraphs—8 reels)

A Notorious Affair

Directed by ..... *Lloyd Bacon*
Featuring ..... *Billie Dove*, *Basil Rathbone*
Play by Audrey and Waverly Carter

THIS story of a gifted violinist and his wife is told with restraint and produced in tasteful settings. Billie Dove lends her beauty to the part of an English society girl who marries the struggling musician. This role is played by Basil Rathbone whose fine acting ability and impelling personality are an asset to any picture. In this film he builds up a character study of a temperamental violinist who at the cost of others' happiness, particularly his wife's, considers only his own welfare.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

One Romantic Night

Directed by ..... *Paul Stein*
Featuring ..... *Lillian Gish*
Play "The Swan" by Ferenz Molnar

A ROMANTIC farce of a princess whose mother is determined to see her married to the crown prince of the kingdom but who herself has a leaning toward the presentable young tutor for her brothers. This picture seems rather far removed from Molnar's play, from which it is adapted, both in idea and manner of presentation, but taken for itself alone it provides good entertainment. Interest is maintained in the story through some uncertainty as to which admirer is finally to receive the favor of the princess. The cast includes in addition to Lillian Gish such names as Conrad Nagel, Rod La Rocque, Marie Dressler and O. P. Heggie.

For the family audience.

(United Artists—8 reels)

Prince of Diamonds

Directed by ..... *Karl Brown*, *A. H. Van Buren*

Featuring ..... *Aileen Pringle*, *Ian Keith*

Screen story by Gene Markey

THIS fantastic tale, which takes us from England to the interior of China and back again to London, succeeds in holding the attention until the ending. It concerns the love of two men for a lovely woman. At the beginning of the film, the unfavored suitor wins her by trickery, forcing her to drive the man she loves away, as he hopes, forever—but he reckons without the hero. Ian Keith gives an interesting performance in this latter role and Aileen Pringle fits perfectly into the part she plays.

For the mature audience.

(Columbia—7 reels)

---

* Show Girl in Hollywood

Directed by ..... *Mervyn Le Roy*

Featuring ..... *Alice White*, *Jack Mulhall*

Screen story by J. P. McEvoy

HER show having failed Dixie goes to Hollywood with high hopes. However she soon suffers disillusionment when she learns that the man who promised her a part in his new show is a faker, but luck smiles on her eventually when the young boy with whom she was in love back East comes to conquer Hollywood. An entertaining picture featuring the Broadway show girl character, Dixie, made famous by J. P. McEvoy.

For the family audience.

(First National—9 reels)

---

* Song O' My Heart

Directed by ..... *Frank Borzage*

Featuring ..... *John McCormack*

Screen story by Tom Barry

JOHN McCORMACK brings his attractive personality and marvelous voice to the screen in a tale full of tender pathos, fine humor delivered in rich brogues, and delightful settings. The outstanding moments in the film are those in which he sings, of course, and his voice loses none of its richness and charm in the recording. The story, laid principally in a lovely little Irish village, is a simple one telling of a talented singer who years before had given up his career when the woman he loves was forced to marry a wealthy man. He finds happiness in being able to help her children when their father deserts them. Besides the presence of John McCormack, the film is further enhanced by the acting of the two children and by the comedy of the two old villagers.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Fox—9 reels)

Swellhead

Directed by ..... *James Flood*

Featuring ..... *Johnny Walker*, *James Gleason*, *Natalie Kingston*

Story by A. P. Younger

WHEN a man deserts his sweetheart and his friends of the east side and joins a high class crowd, there is bound to be trouble—at least in the movies. Johnny Walker plays the part of the prize fighter who, when success comes his way, gets such a swelled head that he almost loses the love of those he needs most. The scenes in the boarding house are amusing with the loud voiced Irish landlady alternately telling Johnny what a good-for-nothing he is and defending him staunchly before the other boarders. Two of them quite agree with her, the girl who loves Johnny and a fight trainer, well played by James Gleason, who takes the young fighter in hand.

For the family audience.

(Tiffany—7 reels)

---

* This Mad World

Directed by ..... *William De Mille*

Featuring ..... *Basil Rathbone*, *Kay Johnson*

French play "Terre Inhumaine" by Francois Decurel

AN unusually well produced drama of the World War concerning a princess and a soldier in the secret service. A Frenchman goes to his home in Alsace-Lorraine to spend his leave with his mother and finds there a young German princess who has taken up her residence with the French woman. The girl is torn between loyalty to her country and love for a man and the outcome of this story makes a most interesting picture.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—8 reels)

What a Man!

Directed by ..... George J. Crone
Featuring .....Reginald Denny
Novel "His Dark Chapter" by E. J. Rathe

A GREAT comedy, crammed full of laughs and splendidly acted by everyone in the cast. The story is ridiculous, but it provides countless hilarious situations. A man, of obvious refinement, presents himself as a tramp to a wealthy lady who, he has heard, has a weakness for reforming hoboes. She hires him as her chauffeur despite the wrath of her whole family. They gradually, one by one, take him to their hearts, especially the elder daughter. Harvey Clark does a very amusing piece of work as the father and Anita Louise, as his younger daughter, is a marvelous little actress.

For the family audience.

(Sono Art—World Wide—10 reels)

Young Eagles

Directed by.....William A. Wellman
Featuring.....Charles Rogers
Stories by Elliott White Springs

A ROMANCE of the World War. A young American aviator brings down the German ace known as the Eagle. Bob is going to Paris on a furlough and is ordered to take the German with him and try and obtain information from him, but the German suspects the motive behind his freedom and Bob learns nothing. When he reaches Paris many disturbing and mysterious things happen, especially concerning his girl, Mary, and the young German. However after the war the three become fast friends.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

The Man from Blankley's

(See page 6)

For the mature audience.

(Warner—7 reels)

NON-FEATURES

Albert Carroll

(Vitaphone No. 935)

Impressions.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Always Faithful

(Vitaphone No. 3334)

Act featuring Blanche Sweet.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

---

* Big Top Champions

(Sportlight Series)

Unusually interesting picture showing how animals are trained for circus acts.

For family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

---

* Dogging It

(Sportlight Series)

Greyhounds racing.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

---

* Feline Fighter

(Sportlight Series)

Interesting picture of a fight between a wild cat and a dog.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

For Sale

(Vitaphone No. 3335)

Gregory Ratoff in a skit.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

---

* The Golden Pagoda

(Sportlight Series)

A trip to Burma.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

He Trumped Her Ace

A young married couple find themselves in the divorce court because of their inability to play bridge together.

For the family audience.

(Educational—2 reels)

Hello, Baby!

(Vitaphone Nos. 3641-2)

An act featuring the Broadway favorite, Ann Pennington.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—2 reels)

A Holiday in Storyland

(Vitaphone No. 3824)

Featuring the Kiddie Troupers.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Money Money Money

(Vitaphone No. 961)

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

A Night in a Shooting Gallery

An all color picture of a shooting gallery where the dolls come to life and dance and sing.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Pathe Audio Review Nos. 7-10 & 12

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel each)

Screen Snapshots

Tours through Hollywood, one conducted by Johnny Arthur, the other by Harry Gribbon.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Columbia—1 reel each)

Splashing Through

(Sportlight Series)

Excellent shots of swimming.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Wanderlust

(Robert Bruce Scenic)

Beautiful scenic with song interludes.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—1 reel)

White Lies

(Vitaphone No. 3667)

A young Russian girl working in a mill dreams of her Prince Charming and in an astonishing manner her dream comes true.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Who's Who

(Vitaphone No. 915)

Lang and Healy.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Zelda Santley

(Vitaphone No. 919)

"Little Miss Everybody"—good impersonations.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

MUSICAL SUBJECTS

Mme. Alda

(Vitaphone No. 943)

The opera star renders "Ave Maria".

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Douglas Stanbury

(Vitaphone No. 918)

Some fine singing by the well known tenor, including "Pack Up Your Troubles."

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Herschel Henlere

(Vitaphone No. 933)

"The Madcap Musician"—a wonder at the piano.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

James Barton

(Vitaphone No. 926-7)

"The Underdog"—fine singing and dancing.

For the family audience.

(Warner—2 reel)

Martinelli

(Vitaphone No. 932)

Excellent selections from "Martha" by the famous opera star.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

SHORT COMEDIES

The Benefit

(Vitaphone No. 939)

Joe Frisco in an entertaining skit.

For the family audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Brats

A very amusing comedy in which Laurel and Hardy play the parts of both fathers and their two small, mischievous sons.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Fifty Million Husbands

Comedy of a suspicious wife and a husband, played by Charlie Chase, who innocently gets into an embarrassing predicament.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Match Play

A Mack Sennett comedy of two poor golfers who make a wager that they will win eighteen holes. They both choose a professional for a partner and a real contest begins.

For the family audience.

(Educational—2 reels)

The Midnight Lodge

(Vitaphone No. 923)

Amusing comedy with the two favorites, Miller and Lyles.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—1 reel)

Pretzels

Amusing cartoon of the rivalry between a cat and a mouse over a lady mouse with all the birds and bugs coming forth to dance.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Educational—1 reel)

Tramping Tramps

(Oswald Cartoon)

The Lucky Rabbit becomes a knight of the road.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Universal—1 reel)

Tough Winters

Our Gang spends a winter's day making taffy with dire results to the house.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

UFA, which is a contraction of Universum-Film Aktien Gesellschaft, the German motion picture producing company, has a well nigh inexhaustible supply of scientific films. The subjects treated are varied and they are presented in such a thoroughly scientific and at the same time interesting way that they are valuable both for educational and entertainment use.

The National Board was called upon for information regarding these films by a number of interested teachers, graduate students at Columbia University, and two showings were arranged whereby Ufa exhibited a score of films upon different subjects to these teachers and also to members of several Better Films Committees who find contact with the schools of growing importance in their committee work.

Some of the films shown were *The Motherly Oak, Partnerships Under the Sea, The Fight for Life, Amazing Lovers, The Breath of Life,* and *When Deadly Enemies Meet.* Ufa has in its educational series about one hundred and fifty pictures. A number of the films are titled for both theatrical and classroom use and some are available with sound, furnishing a valuable lecture accompaniment to the picture. All the Ufa Super-educational pictures are printed on safety film and can be had in either 35 or 16 mm. width.

Better Films Committees can recommend the use of these films in either theatre or school and will find their recommendation amply justified.

OF especial interest to Catholic audiences is a picture *The Shower of Roses,* recently reviewed by the National Board. The concensus of the committee's opinion was that it was an unusually good picture for Catholic schools. The film, made in France and distributed by the Pinnacle Film Service, Inc., 876 Broadway, Brooklyn, New York, depicts the life of Saint Theresa, showing how her promise to send a shower of roses helped a young girl and her family. Incidentally another picture very worth while for Catholic showings is *Saint Francis of Assissi,* distributed by Portale Films, 630 Ninth Avenue, New York City.

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

offers through its

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An Opportunity to Promote Better Motion Picture Programs in Your Home Theatre

The Better Films Committee, or Motion Picture Study Club, plan has been found by many committees to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. V, No. 5-6 May-June, 1930

Battle scene from the war film "All Quiet on the Western Front" (*see page* 5)

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS JUN 16 1930

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture. It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Young Man of Manhattan

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Motion Pictures As Recreation

By Lee F. Hanmer

Director, Department of Recreation, Russell Sage Foundation

There is never a lack of interest in the subject of recreation for children, and now with vacation days at hand this interest is increased. We believe, therefore, that Mr. Hanmer's address delivered at our Sixth Annual Conference will provide a timely study for better films groups. It was said of Mr. Hanmer, when he was introduced by Dr. Tyson, the presiding officer of the Conference session, "I know of no one better prepared through long experience to deal with the motion picture in its recreational aspects. His experience and background in many fields includes public school athletics, industrial welfare work of a great industry, the Playground and Recreation Association of America, the war camp training recreation program, and his work for a long time as recreation director of the Russell Sage Foundation."—Editor's Note.

RECREATION for whom? Is it recreation for you and for me, or is it recreation for youth, those boys and girls from sixteen to twenty-one years of age; or is it recreation for that very, very difficult group of boys and girls from ten to fifteen; or is it recreation for the children below the age of ten? Within each one of those groups there are also those personal equations that figure so largely in our recreation needs. What is the balanced ration of motion pictures for the widely varying needs of the individuals within these age and sex groups? We have a lot of difficulty in working out our diet schedules. We give earnest consideration to what foods we should eat and how much, but do we think half as hard about what programs are served up to our young people and even to ourselves in motion pictures or any other form of recreation? Do we not take many chances and go haphazardly and blindly at it?

How many of us know what pictures our children are seeing? Don't they usually just "go to the movies" and take what happens to be served up to them? The National Board of Review is giving splendid service in that

Lee F. Hanmer

direction by having intelligent people sit in on pre-views, classify the pictures, and tell us what are suitable for this, that, and the other group.

I have been much interested in a certain photograph. It is a photograph of a group of boys and girls, probaly eight to ten years of age, who were seeing a motion picture that was being shown by one of our welfare agencies. It is a flashlight picture, so the children are caught just as they were expressing themselves through their faces. They were seeing exactly the same thing under exactly the same conditions, and they did not know they were being photographed, so they are not posing. The wide range of reactions from laughter to fear, from keen interest to mild amusement shown in those faces will give us a better understanding of what this problem of motion pictures for boys and girls, particularly the younger boys and girls, really is. What these children see in the picture is determined to a great extent, no doubt, by what they bring to it from the background of their own lives. It illustrates, too, why we disagree so frequently in our judgments on pictures.

I have taken my own boy and girl to see pictures for recreation and for education—recreation, broad amusement, entertainment, and all that—and I have noted the wide range of their reactions. I remember them weeping copiously over the picture of the "Ugly Duckling", just sorry about the things that were happening on the screen, and I have seen them come back wide-eyed and thrilled by a picture of an adventure out on the western frontier. Then there is the never failing delight in the animated cartoons. *The Three Musketeers* type of picture was also included. But out of it all, I am happy to say their own sense of selection of moving pictures developed. We have talked in the family about what pictures we would like to see, what pictures we would be interested in—not what was good for us—and they really got the idea in their minds that it was a good thing to pick one's amusement a bit, giving some thought to what one would see as well as to other things in the free time program.

I would not have wished them to see *The Trial of Mary Dugan,* but I went to see it and would like to see it again. That is clearly not a picture for young children. Therefore, selection, classification and the exercise of some parental guidance in this as well as in other matters would help. How can we select and classify in this matter of motion pictures as recreation? We can use the facilities that the National Board of Review and other great national organizations are putting at our disposal to get information about what is coming on the screen. I think also that we should reflect those judgments back to the folks who are making motion pictures. They want help in determining what pictures they should make. There is a real difference between censoring pictures, cutting out pieces of film to eliminate scenes and titles, and in telling producers what you think about the pictures they have made as a guide to future productions. The latter, constructive cooperation, appeals to me much stronger as the way to make progress.

We have very funny ideas about recreation, anyway! I had occasion to check up a little on some of the attitudes concerning recreation through which we have been passing during the ages. Here are the two things that struck me. I found this statement made not so many years ago, by a German educator:

"Play must be forbidden in any and all forms. The children must be instructed in this matter in such a way as to show them through the presentation of religious principles the wastefulness and folly of all play."

Then another man farther down the line, writing concerning the principles guiding a school for young people under the discipline of the Church, said:

"We prohibit play in the strongest terms. The student shall be indulged in nothing which the world calls play. Let this rule be observed with the strictest nicety, for those who play when they are young will play when they are old."

Think of it. If they play when they are young, they will play when they are old! Shocking, isn't it! Why, that is the heart of our playground doctrine—if we can get young people interested in wholesome play, it is possible that it may carry over into adult life, and the job will be done. They realized the principle, but they had a different notion about the value of play. One of the later prophets, who is still with us, has this to say: "The idea that the need for play can be

(*Continued on page* 15)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

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EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

All Quiet on the Western Front

Directed by .....*Lewis Milestone*
Photographed by .....*Arthur Edeson*

Novel by Erich Maria Remarque

The Cast

Paul .....*Lewis Ayres*
Katczinsky .....*Louis Wolheim*
Himmelstoss .....*John Wray*
Peter .....*Owen Davis, Jr.*
Albert .....*William Bakewell*
Muller .....*Russell Gleason*
Tjaden .....*Slim Summerville*

THERE were skeptics when it was announced that Erich Maria Remarque's great book about the war was to be produced in motion picture form. There was some reason to doubt whether this moving and essentially poetic chronicle of a German soldier could be transferred to the screen so as to preserve a fair share of the quality of the book, the note of human beauty that penetrates the fury and brutality of senseless madness until it prevails over all the sound and horror. Happily, and somewhat miraculously, the direction of Lewis Milestone and the script work of Maxwell Anderson and George Abbott combined to accomplish the hardly to be expected, and the film *All Quiet on the Western Front* emerges as a magnificent cinematic equivalent of the book.

All Quiet on the Western Front is certainly the finest of all the Great War pictures, and the outstanding film made with speech and sound. No other scenes of battle like these have been thrown on the screen, nor such imagination in projecting what human beings, simple everyday human beings, are called upon to endure in circumstance that defies and upsets men's reason. And faithful it remains in feeling and narrative to Remarque's original. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Abbott doubtless saw to this. But to Mr. Milestone goes the credit of effecting the similitude in united and dynamic picture terms. He has used his camera to form a cinematic pattern and so has created a true motion picture first of all. Behind this pattern he has utilized another, that of sound and dialogue, so perfectly fitted to the first that the two move together without blur or intrusion upon each other. *All Quiet* is not a photographed and phonographed narrative. The sound and image mediums blend as one, as a form of artistic expression that only the motion screen can give; the essential structure of images in motion to create the visual effect is never marred by the recording "mike." So much, briefly, for the technical achievement which the film represents in adapting sound to pictures so as to preserve the form. It may only be added that after seeing this film no one can deny the potency of sound effect to heighten the power of the motion picture. Here men talk and laugh and cry out in agony against the terrible background monotony of machine gun sputter and crashing shells forever shifting back and forth across the grey front from far off to blinding nearness, until there is created in the audience out of the continuous presence of the nightmare the feeling of the not unusual, the acceptance of the awful reality, which it was necessary for the soldier to feel and accept before he could endure the thing he had to face and exist or die in.

Paul and his Comrades in "All Quiet on the Western Front"

Thus it happens that the film makes convincing what is so convincing in the book—the deadening which modern war causes to the responses to the values of the natural world of those called upon to suffer it. What could the world of peace hold for Paul and Kat and the rest after the world of war? One sees them, almost with relief, taken one by one from their misery and dilemma. Yet how beautifully and with what pathos the film, like the book, shows these boys doing the things that keep their human nature intact—the chats together, the instinctive grasp at normal existence and normal feelings in the brief spells of rest after the animal savagery in the trenches, the search to return to life after all the killings to find the old values of love and friendship. The incident of the swim of Paul and his friends across the stream to the house of the French girls, the spending of that tragic hour, corroborates in the film the moving beauty of that episode in the book. It is almost like the words of the book, speaking to us in pictures, recreating the mood of hush and softness and darkness, of a bit of shut off space in the realm of terror, where the bayonets and the shells are kept outside the door in the night. One sees that there is no morality in war—it is a thing apart. Man's effort is to remain man in the midst of the inhuman horror.

One great appeal of the picture is to be found, one may well think, in the blessed relief from seeing actors, in the ordinary sense, playing the parts of these simple German boys. Mr. Wolheim, the most noted of the cast, proceeds with his character of Kat as if war and the lot of the German soldier were his field rather than that of the motion picture scene—his is a touching, altogether believable performance; and for the rest, Mr. Milestone has done well to gather his talent from among those who, happily, rarely impress one as professionals. This helps immeasurably to make the picture real.

All Quiet on the Western Front deserves and impells lengthier appreciation than can be given it in the space here. The book, of course, is one thing. It is literature with all the connotative power of words, words liv-

ing and sense-awakening and not to be translated precisely with all their shades of magic and meaning into the language of a completely different art. But in the framework of the book, this different art of the sound motion picture has been made to function so as to work the material over in its own way, to present it powerfully and beautifully. The film is an altogether unusual and meritorious one. None of those many thousands who read and were moved by the power of the Remarque story need fear that this film glosses or perverts the truth of the original. It is one of those rare things of the screen —a production which touches the written word with imagination and care for its essential flavor. It makes one hope that Mr. Anderson and Mr. Abbott will have many opportunities to prepare material for the screen. And it stamps Mr. Milestone as one of the chosen few of the thoroughly capable directors. And to the Universal Company must be given the credit for entrusting this film to the hands of those who could endow it with discernment and creative feeling.

Produced and distributed by Universal.

Old and New

Directed by .....Sergei M. Eisenstein
Photographed by .....Edouard Tisse
Screen story by Sergei M. Eisenstein and Gregory V. Alexandrov

SERGEI M. EISENSTEIN'S latest film *Old and New,* now being shown in New York, reveals its brilliant director as an artist adept at handling and developing individual character as well as the mass protagonist. Taking only the people of the Russian countryside for his actors, Eisenstein has constructed, roughly speaking, a story-picture, one contrasting the customs and rural methods of the primitive peasants with those to be found or expected under the regime of scientific farming advocated by the present governmental system. It is a film individualized by a tenderness, understanding and humor hitherto not to be found, or only rarely, in the films of Eisenstein and Pudovkin. The *Arsenal* of Dovzhenko, it is true, presented these qualities but they were made manifest in the oblique subjections of its exalted abstract method. Eisenstein has always

The Cow as Bride from the Russian film "Old and New"

Guests at the Cow's Wedding in the "Old and New"

been objective and analytical, his humor, like his satire and pictorial description, until now has been stylized or allegorical or sardonic. It has flickered through magnificent, dynamic, and multitudinous mass spectacle, but in *Old and New* it is explicit in the steadily developed continuity of character delineation. *Old and New* is full of robust good humor, its quality is of the earthy soil, from which its people spring as persons of extraordinary variety, strength and interest. The movement of these people is in the direction of a social program rather than in that of a huge, onsweeping emotion. Their actions are impelled by conscious orderly purpose rather than by the tumultuous urge of social change the ends of which are dimly perceived. Eisenstein in abandoning the mob has found a new power and appeal through the individual.

Given a propaganda tract on agricultural and industrial development and amalgamation, Eisenstein makes a work of art and a poem. Nowhere else in his notable achievements does he show himself to be such a virtuoso. Endowed by the photography of Edouard Tisse, this magnificent film is the masterpiece of the Russian montage—the theory of cutting, assemblage and timing of short related individual scenes to obtain the associational effect aimed at by the visual concept before the production of the film is begun. In this simple story of the peasant girl Martha Lapkina and the collective farm which she founds with the help of the district agricultural commissioner, her struggle against the prejudice and established customs of the older peasants, her final conquest with the buying of the tractor to plough the fields of the community, the full gamut of cinematic manipulation is run, the eye is overpowered by the tremendous bull's-eye-hitting power of Eisenstein's imaginative aim, the pattern becomes a shuttle weaving back and forth through the materials and aspects of farming life. Details of fields, grass, wheat, blades of scythes and the teeth of harrows are dove-tailed together with such effect as to make one see this life of the soil, and to feel it, with a vividness not to be attained by the naked eye of any actual observer. Even the farmer seated before this film would be startled by a new perception of

(*Continued on page* 15)

The Silent Enemy

Directed by .....H. P. Carver
Photographed by .....Marcel Le Picard
Screen story by William Douglas Burden

The Cast

(Natives of the Ojibway Tribe)
Chetoga (Tribe Leader).Chief Yellow Robe
Baluk (Mighty Hunter).Chief Long Lance
Dagwan (Medicine Man).Chief Akawansh
Neewa (Chetoga's Daughter)..Spotted Elk
Cheeka (Chetoga's Son).....Cheeka

THIS film is the first serious attempt, and a very admirable one, to record the fast vanishing life of the American Indian in its native setting. It is done with the same sincerity and artistry that made *Chang, Grass, Nanook* and *Moana* such notable artistic successes. The entire cast are Indians, two of them, at least, outstanding men of their race. Great care was taken to have each detail correct, tepees, canoes, spears, bows and arrows, buckskin clothing, methods of hunting and fishing; many of the articles used were tribal heirlooms.

It is a silent film for the most part, the exceptions being an opening speech by Chief Yellow Robe, very impressive in its naive simplicity and occasional Indian chants founded on the music of the Ojibways.

The scene of the story is laid in the north woods before the coming of Columbus. An Ojibway tribe is camped on a river while the braves hunt to lay in the winter's supply of meat. It is one of those years, said by Indian tradition to come every seventh year, when game is scarce, and there is a foreboding in the mind of the old Chief Chetoga, impersonated by Chief Yellow Robe, that the "Silent Enemy," hunger, which always dogged the steps of the Indians, is drawing close. Baluk, played by Chief Long Lance, the mighty hunter, returns with his band from a hunting expedition unsuccessful. In the tribal council that follows, there is a struggle between him and Dagwan, the Medicine Man, as to what the tribe shall do. Baluk advises that they go to the frozen north to intercept the great annual migration of the caribou; the Medicine Man wants them to return to their old hunting grounds. The

Chief Yellow Robe and Cheeka in "The Silent Enemy"

enmity between the two men is still further enhanced by their rivalry for the hand of the old chief's daughter, Neewa. The old chief finally decides for the northern trek, and the tribe strikes camp and starts north on snow-shoes and dog-sleds. Day after day they journey, the game so scarce that starvation is almost certain. The tribe grows restive and the old chief withdraws to an ice-bound rock to meditate and consult the Great Spirit. Meanwhile Baluk and the Medicine Man go out on separate hunting expeditions. Baluk, after a most exciting struggle, kills a bull moose, all the game he has been able to find. The Medicine Man finds a cache of meat left by a southward bound tribe; and although it is against the law of the woods to touch such food, even though starving, he determines to pretend he had a vision telling him where to look for it. When the two hunters return and the old chief is released from his meditations, he says that the Great Spirit told him in a vision to continue their march to the north. Again the tribe takes up its trek. When they reach the cache the Medicine Man has foretold, they find a wolverine has fouled it. Day after day they journey through the snow, the old and weak falling by the way. Even the old chief succumbs and sees the white canoe of death coming for him. Before he dies he appoints Baluk as chief. The grinding, desperate march goes on until the tribe reaches the barren lands. But there is no sign of the caribou. The Medicine Man in the council claims that the Great Spirit is angry with Baluk, and the council decrees his death. Baluk chooses the death of a chieftain, and mounts the funeral pyre. Just as he is singing his death song and the flames are leaping toward him, the outposts signal the coming of the caribou. They pass in thousands upon thosuands, a seemingly endless procession. The film ends with feasting and singing.

There are many extraordinary animal episodes in the picture, the scrape between the mountain lion and bears, the fight between the bull moose and the wolves, the passing of the herd of caribou, one of the most impressive and thrilling sights that have ever come to the screen. Scarcely less interesting and wholly humorous is the capture of the two bear cubs, and the trip the small Indian boy makes with them in his canoe through boiling rapids when left at home by the hunting party. Very impressive and beautiful, too, in their simplicity are the shots of the autumn woods and the long barren snow treks with the tribe on snow-shoes and dog-sleds, as well as the various Indian ceremonials.

The film was shot on one of the great reservations in northern Canada in the sub-Arctic circle, and was a year in the making.

The drama and comedy are adroitly balanced, and the simple story on which this admirable epic of Indian life and custom is hung, is well suited to the purpose.

Produced by Wm. D. Burden and W. C. Chanler; distributed by Paramount

LOUISE WALLACE HACKNEY

Journey's End

Directed by .....James Whale
Photographed by .....Benjamin Kline
Play by R. C. Sherriff

The Cast

Captain Stanhope.....Colin Clive
First Lieutenant Osborne....Ian Maclaren
Second Lieutenant Raleigh..David Manners
Second Lieutenant Hibbert.Anthony Bushell

David Manners in "Journey's End"

The Spotlight Battery Preparing to Shoot Battle Scenes in "Journey's End"

HERE is another successful blow at the superstition so prevalent in studios, that books and plays have to be altered in a special way before they can be made palatable to motion picture audiences. One might have thought that the tremendous and universal success of "Journey's End" upon the stage was evidence enough of its popular quality, but so simple and sensible a view as that is rarely to be met with among producers of pictures. So it is little short of astonishing to find the production done as well as possible for its own sake, with no attempt to pep it up for movie audiences by the injection of sex interest or other hokum.

The result is more important as a rare example of intelligent sincerity than as a cinematic landmark. By that nothing more is meant than that the picture makes no striking contribution to the development of cinema technique. But no one could have expected it to. Its job was all cut out for it, simply to transfer a play from the stage to the screen. To have tried to make fundamental structural alterations was as unnecessary as it would have been foolish.

So what we have is Mr. Sherriff's play faithfully and skillfully photographed, with very few additions and almost no deletions. James Whale, who had directed several productions of the play on the stage also directed this production before the camera. There is no sign of the novice in his work. The camera and the microphone are eloquent instruments in his hands, and through them he has projected the same depth of understanding and the same moving combination of strength and tenderness that he was so conspicuously successful in putting across the footlights.

The story—the brief last hours of some English officers in a dug-out in the war—is familiar to everyone who has been in touch with the theatre during the last year. It is a peculiarly English thing, and English of a special class. As that it is an important aspect of the war, and the way in which it has been done puts it in the very small group of important war pictures. Everybody concerned with the production has contributed something valuable to the complete success of the work, particularly the actors, among whom Colin Clive and Ian MacLaren stand out for rich and moving performances.

Produced by Tiffany-Gainsborough; distributed by Tiffany.

The Melody of Hearts

Directed by .....Hanns Schwarz
Photographed by .....Guenther Rittau
Screen story by Hans Szekely

The Cast

Julia .....Dita Parlo
Janos .....Willy Fritsch

THE first sound picture to be made by UFA comes to the American screen somewhat handicapped by a fatuous title, which is even worse in translation than in the original German. Led to expect from it nothing but a sentimental *melange,* one is agreeably surprised to find that in it the continuity of the UFA tradition has been preserved. The story is still told largely in pantomime. Pictorial impressionism is still the method by which moods are created and atmosphere is etched. The new appeals of music and dialogue have been utilized, to be sure, but they have been made subordinate to the pictures. If the hero sings as he polishes his boots in the barracks, if his fellow-soldiers revel over their steins, if the carrousel grinds out reedy tunes, if the women in the fields chant as they sow, why it is all part of the general pattern of living. Sound and action flow together; the thread of the story never has to be interrupted or retarded for solo performances and incidental music. Singing and dialogue are only two of many means by which the total effect is achieved.

In their imaginative use of the camera, the early scenes recall *Berlin: The Symphony of a Big City,* which, although it was a silent film created, through the clever manipulation of pictures, a striking impression of sound. Curiously enough in the present picture the visual reproduction of engine wheels clattering over a trestle or sliding on smooth rails into the "Bahnhof", of steam whistles blowing and doors of compartments opening and closing, of trolley cars clanging and the tread of many feet, calls up the noise and bustle of a great city quite independently of whatever the sound track on the film may at the moment record.

The two characters with Budapest in the background from "The Melody of Hearts"

This pictorial competence has always been one of the assets of UFA, and it has not been lost in any feverish absorption in the new pro-

cess. There is about the film a careful effort to retain the best of the old silent methods and at the same time to use sound wherever it will strengthen or reinforce the drama. UFA, in producing its first talkie so late in the history of the invention, has profited by the mistakes of other companies which rushed so precipitately into sound. One cannot help but feel that the quality of restraint which marks this film is to a large extent reactionary. But whatever the cause, the result is a happy combination of the old pictorial tradition with the new dispensation of sound.

Dialogue is used sparingly. In all there are scarcely more than a hundred lines, and each speech is phrased with the utmost brevity. When the characters do indulge in words after long silent sequences, there is never any incongruity, never any impression that the dumb have been made miraculously to speak or that the loquacious have been struck suddenly speechless. If there are no words, it is because no words are necessary. The lovers walk hand in hand on the ramparts of the city. They are content to be together, to smile. The tonal quality of whatever speech there is is pleasant to hear. In the case of Dita Parlo this is due not alone to the reproducing device but to an exquisite gift of voice.

Her acting, too, possesses distinction. Its shading and spontaneity lift the picture to heights which, it must be confessed, the banality of the story would otherwise keep it from attaining. The plot has to do with the love of a little servant girl for a soldier. The complication is not, as might be expected, his desertion of her, but her entanglement in the Cafe Paradise where a combination of innocence, economic stress and a scheming landlady has landed her. She is anxious to earn money to help Janos buy a horse so that he may retire from the army and start a trucking business. But when he discovers her defection he casts her off and betroths himself to the daughter of a wealthy farmer neighbor. Julia, before seeking peace in the waters of the Danube, buys the horse and leaves it for Janos as her last will and testament.

But this the movie god of happy endings does not permit. And if the final rescue is threadbare as a dramatic device, one gladly barters originality for the lovely shots of the Danube. The whole Hungarian background is as real as the Lithuanian forests in *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* are artificial. The city streets, the *kermess* outside of Buda Pesth, the beer gardens, the fields and river banks are as authentic and colorful as a piece of peasant embroidery. The picture is folk-stuff, of the very fibre and tissue of the country. The makers, like Liszt, went to the people for the sources of the Hungarian spirit. To see the picture is to go for an hour to Buda Pesth.

Produced and distributed by UFA Films.

FRANCES TAYLOR PATTERSON

White Hell of Pitz Palu

Directed by ..... *Dr. Arnold Sanck*, *G. W. Pabst*

Photographed by ..... *Sett Algeier*, *Richard Angst*, *Hans Schneeberger*

THE *White Hell of Pitz Palu* is a German production, dealing with human tragedy in the Swiss Alps. The story opens with the arrival of Hans and Maria who have come to the half way cabin on Pitz Palu on their honeymoon. In the midst of their happiness the door opens and a stranger enters who relates to them a tale of horror and death when years before his young wife had been swept away before his eyes into the icy depths of Palu. Because of his return each year to search for the body of his wife, this Dr. Johannes Krafft is called "Ghost of the Mountain".

The three spend the night in the cabin and in the morning they start out to climb the North Wall but when the whole of the mountain seems to slide down on them Hans falls and is rescued by Dr. Krafft. Trapped on an icy ledge by the snow-slides the three await death.

Long before help arrives, Hans has gone out of his head and Maria lies unconscious wrapped in Dr. Krafft's coat. When they awake to consciousness at the cabin, they learn that Dr. Krafft, having done all he could for them, had gone to join his wife in the icy fastness of the North Wall.

Gustav Diesel portrays the unhappy Dr. Krafft with feeling and his acting is excellent throughout. Leni Riesenstahl as Maria does a splendid piece of acting, and Ernst Peterson is also good as Hans.

The story is so simple that it seems almost like a travelogue or a newsreel of a thrilling

adventure. The essential value of the production is its pictorial beauty shown in the shots of the snow-slides, the cloud effects, the aeroplane which flies dangerously over Palu attempting to drop supplies to the sufferers and the night scenes of the rescue party with their torches casting grotesque shadows on the snow. These constitute the art of a skillful cameraman.

The directors, Dr. Arnold Sanck and G. W. Pabst must have experienced some thrilling moments during the production of *White Hell of Pitz Palu.*

Distributed by Universal.

The Devil's Holiday

Directed by.....Edmund Goulding
Photographed by.....Harry Fischbeck
Screen story by Edmund Goulding
The Cast
Hallie Hobart.....Nancy Carroll
David Stone.....Phillips Holmes
Mark Stone.....James Kirkwood
Ezra Stone.....Hobart Bosworth

HERE is a talking film which presents a worth while dramatic plot with directness and power. The story has social value. In Hallie Hobart, a manicurist girl and a gold-digger to boot in a big metropolitan hotel, it contrasts the restlessness and moral carelessness of the modern big city with, in the family of the Stones, the naivete and still firm-rooted Puritanism of the more open space in the hinterland. It is the conflict of the fevered new and the slow-pulsed old, and this is the typical struggle of the social forces of America more than anywhere else in the world today. It is such as that that the motion picture screen can show with importance and with the use of material which has now for long been finding its way into the forms of the stage and the novel. *The Devil's Holiday* gains distinction by being a film that thoughtful people can see and not shudder at.

Technically it is not an unusual sample of motion picture art. It finds little need for cinematic effects. It is a play on the screen and would be equally interesting on the stage. But an intelligent plot has been intelligently handled, banality has been avoided, and in the portrayal of Hallie Hobart by Nancy Carroll, a veritable living and growing character stands forth. The rest of the cast, notably Phillips Holmes as David Stone, Hallie Hobart's boyish husband and Ned Sparks as the hard-boiled salesman who uses Hallie as his confederate to place big orders, are admirable in what they have to do. *The Devil's Holiday* at its least is interesting, at its most is intense and moving.

Produced and distributed by Paramount.

OLD AND NEW

(*Continued from page* 8)

the materials of his occupation, of the portrait of his labor. Truly the human eye is a small shutter compared with that of the camera. And here the camera analyzes in a way to set it by itself as a laboratory recording instrument. At the conclusion one is reassured, if that is necessary, after *Potemkin* and *Ten Days That Shook the World,* that there is only one Eisenstein.

But behind this film there is another meaning that stamps it with an intellectual purpose unique in cinematic intention. In back of its action is an organic satirical pattern, a literary reference, like that behind the outer movement of Joyce's "Ulysses." Thus the wedding of the bull is a parody, the pursuit of the wagon train which is being run away by the tractor by the peasants on horseback, is a parody of customs as portrayed by some films in Eisenstein's own country, a burlesque of the present formula in films emanating from elsewhere; the milk separator which is introduced to the stupified and suspicious peasants has the sparkle, the iridescent splendor of the Grail in "Parsifal", and Martha's dream of the colossal bull rising miraculously over the sea of milk and plenty would seem to have an overtone meaning harking back to the vision of, perhaps, the old prophets.

An original mind is at work here, a genius for the utterance of thought in a new medium. *Old and New* is full of splendor, splendor of imagination and execution, Eisenstein speaks the language of the intellectual cinema, as no one has spoken it before him and as all who would develop it further must learn to speak it after him. *Produced by Sovkino; distributed by Amkino.*

MOTION PICTURES AS RECREATION

(*Continued from page* 4)

suppressed is absolutely fallacious, and the Puritanic tradition which disallows the need has entailed an enormous crop of evils." That is a statement made by our modern philosopher, John Dewey, of Columbia University.

Years ago, I went to a copper mining camp in Bisbee, Arizona, to build a gymnasium for the Copper Queen Mining Company, and organize activities for boys and girls and men and women. Do you know, I actually had a class in "setting-up exercises" in the gymnasium for those husky miners who were coming up out of the ground after eight hours of drilling, digging and handling ore. The poor things went through with it because it was new and because it was all that was to be had. It is funny what little sense people have

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Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

DR. WALTER W. PETTIT, Acting Chairman of the National Board and Director, Community Organization Department, New York School of Social Work, visited Rochester, N. Y., early in May to be guest speaker at a dinner of the Social Workers Club of that city. Dr. Pettit was introduced by Dr. William E. Weld, dean of the men of the University of Rochester, who acted as chairman of the meeting. Great interest was shown in the subject presented and a number of questions followed Dr. Pettit's address.

The regularly monthly luncheon meeting of the Rochester Better Films Council, an affiliated committee of the National Board of Review, fortunately came upon the day that Dr. Pettit visited Rochester and he was a guest for the occasion. In speaking to the Council members Dr. Pettit expressed the encouragement the National Board feels in the way the local committee is undertaking the work. Representatives of different organizations of the city and a number of theatre managers were present and took part in the discussion which brought out many interesting points of motion picture activity. A large committee has been formed in the Rochester Council to take care of the Photoplay Guide to Selected Pictures which made its first appearance in the local newspapers on May 16th.

MRS. LEON A. McINTIRE whose fine better films work as New Jersey State D. A. R. Better Films Chairman, has received much favorable recognition has been delegated to a wide field of activity through her recent appointment by Mrs. Lowell F. Hobart, President General of the D. A. R., as National Vice Chairman of Better Films for the Eastern Division. This Division includes Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

With all of her work outside Mrs. McIntire is nevertheless able to give special attention to her home city of Newark, N. J. She is chairman of a Junior Matinee Committee, the activities and members of which, as stated by Mrs. McIntire, are as follows, "The Little Theatre of Newark is running a series of Saturday morning junior matinees under the supervision of the following committee: Mr. Stuart I. Whitmarsh, Miss Elsa B. Meyerson, Mrs. J. D. Cummin, Mr. Arthur G. Balcom, Miss Mabel Williams and Mrs. Leon McIntire, chairman. This committee is endeavoring to furnish a program of wholesome and carefully selected picture entertainment with some special attraction each week. The Boy and Girl Scouts serve as ushers at these matinees. The Committee have been gratified at the interest and enthusiasm shown by both children and parents, and our audience has increased each week, which proves that there are discriminating parents who will take their children to programs such as ours."

An outline of some of these favored programs may give helpful ideas to others interested in junior matinees. On May 24th the feature picture was *A Kiss for Cinderella* and the added attraction was a story contest, the subject being "Colonel Lindbergh". The child who submittted the best composition had the privilege of reading it to the audience before the showing of the film *Lindbergh Flies Alone*. As the children passed out of the theatre, through the generosity of the Newark firm, Whitehead and Hoag, each one received a coin with the head of Colonel Lindbergh pictured on one side and the "Spirit of St. Louis" on the other side. In connection with the showing of the interesting botany picture, *Nature's Gift to Mankind,* on May 31st, a packet of flower seeds was distributed to each child. The plans for June 7th include besides the feature picture, comedy, newsreel and nature study short, *The Changing Seasons,* several dances by small children of Newark. Flag Day, June 14th, promises to be a gala performance with the ever popular *Peter Pan* as the feature, another story contest, this time about "Our Flag" and this too will be read before the showing of the picture *Hats Off* after which

each child will be presented with an American flag. *The Wizard of Oz,* a children's favorite, will be shown on the June 21st program with a newsreel, comedy and the charming short educational subject *The Little Dutch Tulip Girl* to finish the program.

As stated elsewhere in this department Mrs. McIntire was awarded one of the prizes given at the D. A. R. National Congress for outstanding better films work. Her prize, which it has been our pleasure to see, was a beautiful pair of marcasite and jade earrings worn by Armida in John Barrymore's *General Crack.*

A NEW community committee but one which has succeeded in accomplishing so many of its aims that it is already a force in the town is the Better Films Committee of Westwood, N. J.

Their membership is a very representative one and cooperation has met the Committee on every side, from the churches, the schools, the library, the theatre managers, and the local newspapers.

A report from Mrs. Carter, President of the Committee, says, "Westwood's Better Films Committee is working steadily and surely, even though the road is rough in some places. The Weekly Photoplay Guide is doing its work as is proved by the conversation of one of our exhibtors. He finds he cannot mix his program for the week-end and have it go over. He must have a family picture. Both exhibitors are much inspired by the increase in attendance when a selected or an exceptional picture is shown."

The first junior matinee put on by this Committee was so very successful that they are now arranging another and plan to make this a regular part of their program of work. An adolescent matinee was held featuring the ever-popular picture, *Seven Keys to Baldpate,* with an admission charge of ten cents to all school children. Handbills of the Committee's programs are placed in the schools and libraries of neighboring communities as well as in Westwood so that there is far-reaching interest and patronage resulting.

The Committee is sponsoring a tie-up on the film *Disraeli* in which the High Schools and libraries are cooperating. Five thousand bookmarks listing reading material related to the film have been printed and distributed.

THE National Federation of Music Clubs which evinced an interest in motion pictures by the appointment of a Motion Picture Chairman two years ago has proven the value of the Chairmanship by the number of calls which it has made upon Mrs. E. H. Cahill who has so very ably filled the office. The annual meeting of the New York Music Federation was held in Rochester in April and Mrs. Cahill there planned a presentation showing how films might be used in the study work of the Music Clubs. Through the kindly cooperation of Fitzpatrick Pictures we were enabled to provide for Mrs. Cahill two of the films in the Famous Music Master Series—the life of Stephen Foster and the life of Schubert. There was an enthusiastic response by the members of the Federation to this showing. The Rochester Better Films Council was informed, as touching their activities, of this motion picture angle of the State Music Federation and worked with local Music Federation members in the plans for the showing at the Sagamore Hotel. Other states have become interested in this picture series and the increased use of it and other films in the music field may result.

Mrs. Cahill also carried to the annual Board meeting in Charleston, S. C., an outline of her plans for the coming year which foretells a closer linking of the two interests of music and pictures.

Many Better Films Committees combined the National Music Week celebration in some way with their programs, by showing either a musical short subject or a feature related to music as the German masterpiece *Siegfried* or by having local music talent take part in the special junior programs. Here is perhaps a new contact for other Committees.

THE Home and School Association of Leonia, N. J., having spent some time in the investigation of the possibility of junior matinees in the community decided to try out the idea during the Easter school holiday. On Wednesday morning, April 23rd, they presented a program consisting of *The Boy of Flanders,* with Jackie Coogan, a comedy and a newsreel. Music was generously contributed by the organist of one of the local churches. The Committee from the Association of which Mrs. George Macalister is chairman, was assisted by the principal of the Grammar School.

Over 700 were present, of which 610 were children, so that even with the low admission charge of ten cents for children and fifteen cents for adults the Association received from the theatre management which had interestedly worked with the Committee, a sum from the gross proceeds sufficient to purchase some needed material for its work. New officers of the Association are being elected but it is expected, so great was the interest of the youngsters and the appreciation of the parents, that this trial program will be but the beginning of a regular series of juvenile matinees.

MR. GEORGE J. ZEHRUNG, a member of the Executive Committee of the National Board of Review, who is Director of the National Y. M. C. A. Motion Picture Bureau, has sent us a copy of his report on the Bureau activities for the first four months of 1930. This report shows an astounding increase in the shipments of films from the two exchanges over that of 1929. Mr. Zehrung says, "The amount of work connected with the booking probably deserves the most important notice as the volume of correspondence connected with the arrangement of programs is tremendous." In addition to the work of booking is that of promotion and advisory correspondence and program building. "There is," reports Mr. Zehrung, "every indication that we will have a greater volume of programs to furnish this summer than ever before owing to the increased use of 16 m/m film by camps. The fall and winter catalog is now in preparation. The Bureau will publish two this year, one for 35 m/m and one 16 m/m. The form letter announcing the new catalogs will be sent to Y. M. C. A. secretaries in July. There will be a return postal card enclosed upon which the secretary is requested to give names of organizations and institutions in his community which have motion picture equipment." This information will be of interest we believe to all Better Films Committees.

Mr. Zehrung, in spite of the overcrowded program of work in his organization, gives active interest and aid to the work of the National Board. One example of this was his response to a recent hurried call to the National Board from a D. A. R. Chapter for an Americanization film by making quickly available the fine picture *Peter Points the Way*.

THE Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee continues with unabated interest its regular meetings and activities regarding better films but in addition looks about for means of putting over the purpose and principles of its work in a larger way to a larger group. Two major events were successfully sponsored by this group this spring. The first was the third Annual Spring Tea Conference held on April 28th, in the Woman's Club House of Rutherford with the Woman's Club assisting. The Better Films National Council was happy to accept the invitation of the Rutherford Committee to cooperate on plans for the Conference. The program for the day was a comprehensive and helpful one. Guests were present from many New Jersey communities, coming to learn of better films plans as carried out by the Rutherford Committee and other committees of the state whose work was described by representative speakers. The general topic was "The Better Films Movement as a Community and Social Force", and the program line-up was as follows:

Part I

Greetings from the Woman's Club of Rutherford—Mrs. Edward Eisenacher, President.

Welcome from the Rutherford Better Films Committee—Mrs. Harry B. Pettingill, Vice-president.

Salutation from the Better Films National Council—Mrs. Bettina Gunczy, Secretary.

Message from First Better Films Representative of Woman's Club—Mrs. L. C. Mourey.

Greetings from Better Films Representative of Woman's Club—Mrs. John D. Somerville.

Part II

A Doctor's Viewpoint on Motion Pictures —Dr. Louis I. Harris, former Commissioner of Health of New York City; Member, Executive Committee, National Board of Review.

Part III

Community Better Films Work in New Jersey.

Better Films Committee of Westwood—Mrs. William C. Carter, President.

D. A. R. Better Films Committee in New Jersey—Mrs. Leon A. McIntire, Chairman.

Ridgefield Park, Teaneck and Bogota Mo-

tion Picture Council—Mrs. A. C. Olson, President.

Better Films Work of the Federation of Music Clubs—Mrs. Rankin, N. J. State Federation of Music Clubs, President.

Better Films from the Manager's Viewpoint—Mrs. Isabel Youngerman, Warner Bros., Public Relations in New Jersey.

The Northern New Jersey Association of Motion Pictures—Mrs. Wm. T. Ropes, President.

Part II

Activities of the Rutherford Better Films Committee

How We Built Up a Community Organization—Mrs. Albert E. Hurst, former Chairman of Extension and Membership.

How We Study the Motion Picture—Mrs. William S. John, Chairman of Theatre Review Committee.

How We Interest the Public in Better Films—Mrs. Scott Staples, Chairman of Exceptional Photoplays Committee.

How We Work with the Rivoli Theatre—Mrs. Julius Lovington, Chairman of Children's Morning Matinees.

How the Rutherford Library Works with Better Films—Miss Dorothy Burrows, Librarian.

Part IV

The Real Significance of the Better Films Movement Interpreted by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures—Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary, National Board of Review.

Part VI

Tea and Round Table Discussion—Mrs. Paul V. Chaudron, Chairman of Conference Arrangements.

Refreshments were served at tables bearing banners of women's organizations of Rutherford, each having as hostess an official of the organizations represented which were as follows: Woman's College Club, National Society of New England Women, Delphia Society, Woman's Club, Junior Woman's Club, Daughters of the American Revolution and the Women's Republican Club.

The work necessitated by this conference, which was a highly successful one and well repaid all the efforts, left the Committee undaunted and interest was then centered on the annual dinner. This took place on May 21st and the enthusiasm shown in the dinner indicated that the sixth birthday of this civic organization, the Rutherford Better Films Committee, was not passed unnoticed in the community. The toastmaster was Dr. Charles W. Popham, rector of Grace Episcopal Church. Among the speakers were Mayor H. R. Frizzell and former-Mayor F. N. Dull thus giving recognition to the Committee by the city officials. Other speakers were Mrs. Harry G. Grover, President, Rutherford Better Films Committee, and Mrs. Emma Peters, Rutherford assemblywoman. The National Board was represented by two speakers, members of its Executive Committee, Dr. Walter W. Pettit and Dr. George W. Kirchwey.

The dinner had among its guests representatives from several Parent-Teacher organizations, the Board of Education, the East Side Improvement Association, the Sons of the American Revolution, the Woman's Club, the New England Colony of Women, Everyman's Bible Class and many other prominent organizations in Rutherford who are interested in Better Films activities.

THE annual Congress of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Washington, D. C., offered a fine opportunity to the various better films chapter chairmen to discuss their work. Mrs. William H. Pouch, National Vice Chairman of the Northern Division, has compiled a comprehensive report of the meeting held and matters considered. It was regretted, Mrs. Pouch said, that Mrs. R. R. Russel, the National Better Films Chairman, was not at the Congress but a member of her advisory board was there and forty Better Films Chairmen were present from all over the country.

On April 14th, Mrs. Pouch entertained the Better Films Chairmen of her Division at tea. On the following morning a conference meeting was held in which drawings were made for the awards of souvenirs to the six Divisions and to the winner of the best letter on a picture or Better Films activity.

On Wednesday afternoon, April 15th, following an interview with Mrs. Lowell F. Hobart, President General, at which her permission was gained, a meeting was called in Memorial Continental Hall open to all Better Films Chairmen. In addition to Mrs. Stookey, the representative for Mrs. Russel, there were present: Mrs. Julian McCurry,

Athens, Ga., State Chairman; Mrs. Leon A. McIntire, Newark, N. J., State Chairman; Mrs. Alex C. Flick, Albany, N. Y.; Mrs. M. B. Gibbons, Parkersburg, W. Va.; Mrs. J. E. Geer, Hempstead, L. I., N. Y.; Mrs. William Douglas, Mercersburg, Pa.; Mrs. Cora A. Stewart Bailey, District of Columbia; Miss Mary C. Johnston, Mercersburg, Pa.; Mrs. George W. Shourds, Albion, N. Y.; Mrs. Wilbur Johnson, Indianapolis, Ind.; Mrs. David C. Dibbell, New Haven, Conn.; Mrs. Charles J. Kirby, New York City; Mrs. W. W. Graham, New York City; Mrs. Clermont C. Covert, Slingerlands, N. Y.; Mrs. Vulosko Vaiden, representing State Chairman, Maryland; Mrs. Duncan Campbell, Woodbury, New Jersey; Mrs. William C. Covell, Philadelphia, Pa.; Miss Elsie A. Whitney, Ilion, New York; Mrs. W. C. Tucker, Greensboro, N. C.; Mrs. Mark Thomas, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Mrs. Fisher M. Joslin, Slingerlands, N. Y.; Mrs. N. D. Bunnell, Bloomington, Ill., Division Director; Mrs. William H. Pouch, New York City.

The awards and press books were on display and aroused much interest and comment. The Chairman asked Mrs. Flick, Regent of Mohawk Chapter, Albany, N. Y., to give results of the showing of the Yale Chronicles in the Albany schools. Mrs. McIntire gave a resume of her work and told of the Better Films Council which has been inaugurated in her state. Mrs. McCurry spoke at length upon the subject of Children's Matinees—the difficulty of interesting young people in good pictures. Questionnaires had been sent out asking "The picture I enjoyed most and why?", hoping to gain information which could be put to constructive use. The Chairman told of work being done in New York State with the small 16 m/m camera and projector in taking programs to the shut-ins and to hospital wards; and mentioned one gift of a projector and screen to Tamassee D.A.R. Industrial School, opening up a wonderful field for educational work there. New York State has started a fund called the Tamassee Film Fund, and already has considerable money turned in from Chapters which are anxious to help provide means for the renting of films to be shown. The First District of 42 Chapters in New York State has been organized into four groups, and efforts are made to keep in close touch with other state work, also in round table discussions during the year. Miss Edith Ford, Better Films Chairman, New Netherlands Chapter, New York City, has a Reviewing Committee in the First District which reports to her, and she in turn sends the reviews to Mrs. Russel. Some of the producers release pictures in New York before they are shown in Hollywood, which makes this committee of value. In Rochester, N. Y., Mrs. Hugh Smith, Better Films Chairman of Irondequoit Chapter, has formed a Better Films Council composed of groups from other clubs and societies. This has met with the gratifying results along musical and educational lines.

Mrs. Russel's annual report and her directions concerning the awards were read. Prizes were won by:

Mrs. E .S. Moorer, South Carolina, for the most constructive work and first 100% report of any state. Southern Division.

Mrs. James A. Craig, Florida, honorable mention. Southern Division.

Mrs. Walter Sillers, National Vice Chairman, honorable mention. Southern Division.

Mrs. Frank G. Farmer, California, press book. Pacific Coast Division.

Mrs. Edwin J. Brown, Washington, honorable mention. Pacific Coast Division.

Mrs. Charles F. Johnson, Ohio, press book. Central Division.

Mrs. John W. Riggs, Ill., honorable mention. Central Division.

Mrs. William H. Pouch, New York City, press book. Northern Division.

Miss Katherine Matthies, Conn., honorable mention. Northern Division.

Mrs. Harry Ashby, Okla., first report on an entire Division. Western Division.

Mrs. J. W. Head, Mo., honorable mention. Western Division.

Mrs. Leon A. McIntire, New Jersey, press book. Eastern Division.

Mrs. John I. McGuigan, Penn., honorable mention. Eastern Division.

Mrs. Harvey C. Coulson, Ill., best letter on subject of Motion Pictures.

Many of those winning special recognition work closely with the National Board of Review and we are pleased to extend our congratulations to them.

IT can undoubtedly be attributed to the Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee that the entire city is better films-minded. A recent outstanding example of this is the interest which has been given to the subject by Dr. Edmund F. Cook, Pastor of the Vineville Methodist Church of that city. Dr. Cook when making plans for "Children's Month" in his church, wrote to Mrs. Chestney, president of the Committee, as follows, "You will be interested, I am sure, in our plans for 'Children's Month' at the Vineville Methodist Church. I am sending this note to you as Chairman of the Better Films Committee in order to ask a favor. I want you, if possible, to hear my discussion of 'Our Children and the Movies—Are the Movies a Menace?' I would be glad also if you would invite several of your most sympathetic members to hear the discussion. During next week as I prepare for our second discussion—'Can We Do Anything to Improve the Educational and Ethical Values of the Movie?'—I would like a conference with you and such members of your Committee who will be willing to give a little time so that I may secure from your Committee suggestions that should enter into any effort to answer the question I am discussing. I am not asking you and members of your Committee to attend these services because I think I can render you any special service in your task, but that I may secure assistance in serving my constituency in trying to create a demand for the better type of motion pictures that will be at once sound and wholesome in educational value and profitable to the theatre managers."

Dr. Cook had prepared and distributed to every family in his church, in which there were children, a booklet announcing a special historical junior matinee program of the Better Films Committee, the book addressed "To Interested Parents" pointed out to them that this was "a splendid opportunity to make good use of the movies as an educational influence in the life of our children."

A further important recognition of the Macon Committee by Dr. Cook in his better films study was to have prepared for distribution in his church copies of a pamphlet giving the history and objects of the Committee. The pamphlet states "The Macon Better Films Committee, composed of 21 active members and 50 or more associate members, each representative of a number of civic, religious, educational and social organizations, was organized August 29, 1923, with the following objects in view: to increase the demand for better films by promoting patronage of only clean and wholesome pictures; to discourage salacious and unwholesome films; to provide a weekly moving picture suitable in every way for the children; to encourage visual education." Under each of these headings the methods of carrying out the object is given. "The Better Films Committee holds regular monthly meetings which are open to the public. To these meetings the members bring their picture problems. Reports of the activity of the Committee for the previous month are submitted and future plans are discussed."

This plan could perhaps with very gratifying results be brought by Better Films Committees in other communities to the attention of their different pastors who might be contemplating such a study or willing to undertake one now when so much thought and time is given to motion pictures by their congregation, especially the young people. In this way the Committee aids the church and the church aids the Committee.

THE officers of the Oneonta (N. Y.) Motion Picture Study Club are not going to be idle during the summer months. A recent report states that Mrs. Frank Shutts, president of the Club will receive a scholarship to the Euthenics Institute to be held at Vassar College this summer and that Mrs. Ray D. Champlin, corresponding secretary of the Club, will conduct courses at the Institute. This announcement was made by Dr. Ruth Andrus, director of the division of child development and parental education of the state department of education, at a meeting for leaders in parental education held in the Albany State Teachers college. Six scholarships were awarded all of which were made possible by the Carnegie foundation.

Mrs. Champlin, who is a member of the Hartwick college faculty and leader of the Oneonta Normal school extension class of parental education, will teach a course in philosophy and technology of homemaking at the institute and will cooperate with sociologists, psychiatrists and psychologists in conducting a course on the family. Mrs. Shutts

is music supervisor of the Oneonta public Schools. Notwithstanding their many activities both Mrs. Shutts and Mrs. Champlin give valuable service to the Motion Picture Study Club believing it to be an important civic work in connection with any program of child welfare study.

THE Better Films Secretary was invited to speak on the subject of motion pictures at the meeting of the Woman's Club of Great Kills, Staten Island, on May 6th. Interest has been aroused in a plan of working with the theatre manager in bringing the most desirable pictures to the community and in supporting them. The members of this progressive organization will, it is certain, carry out the plan which means so much in suitable family entertainment. Mrs. L. I. King was re-elected president for the coming year.

"MOTION PICTURE DAY" was a part of the annual program of many of the New York City D. A. R. Chapters. These were arranged by the Chapter D. A. R. Better Films Chairmen to acquaint the members more fully with the different phases of motion picture activity as they touch the better films work of the chapter. Mrs. Newton Otis, Better Films Chairman of the Ellen Hardin Walworth Chapter, planned her meeting in Roosevelt House where there was opportunity to see one of the Roosevelt films, *Roosevelt's Return from Europe in* 1910. The guests were greatly pleased with this pictorial chronicle of an event of twenty years ago and interest was expressed in the entire series of Roosevelt historical films. The New York State Chairman, Mrs. William H. Pouch, told of the better films work of the state which is making such noteworthy progress in many communities and directions. The work of the Better Films National Council of the National Board of Review was described by Mrs. Gunczy, Better Films Secretary, with especial emphasis on the many pleasant and profitable contacts with the D. A. R. groups.

The New Netherlands Chapter of which Miss Edith Ford is Better Films Chairman, held its motion picture day at the McAlpin Hotel. Mr. Glendon Allvine, Director of Publicity, Fox Film Corporation, brought to the members enlightening information on the subject of motion picture exploitation. To this chapter Mrs. Pouch also brought a message of the state-wide work and the Better Films Secretary was again given the opportunity to tell of the National Board of Review. With the Motion Picture Day a regular part of the chapter programs it is evident the motion picture is not being overlooked in the many activities of this organization.

THE Membership Committee of the National Board of Review held its second annual bridge party on May 17th at the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City. Mrs. Oliver Harriman chairman of the hostess committee was assisted by Mrs. Lewis Booth, Mrs. H. G. Grover, Mrs. Leonard Hill, Mrs. Leon A. McIntire, Mrs. Louis Guerineau Myers, Mrs. A. C. Olson, Mrs. Henry C. Quinby, Mrs. E. M. Salter, Mrs. Lionel Sutro and Mrs. T. Yeandle, members of various committees of the National Board. There were over a thousand players competing for the handsome prizes which were donated by leading motion picture stars. It was said to be the largest bridge party of the year at the Pennsylvania Hotel. The donors and their gift prizes were: Warner Baxter, silver fox scarf; Will Rogers, Revelation traveling bag; Ann Harding, self-winding wrist watch; Colin Clive, three piece etched crystal console set; Norma Talmadge, Manning Bowman electric coffee service; Joe E. Brown, Royal Portable typewriter; Richard Dix, crystal necklace; Nancy Carroll, seed pearl evening bag; John Boles, bridge table and chairs; Joan Bennett, indirect lighting bridge lamp; Bebe Daniels, an order for a hat orginally created by Mlle. Nevarte of Paris; Amateur Cinema League, QRS DeVry B-type motor projector. The low score prize was most unique being a series of bridge lessons at the Whitehead Bridge Studios. Mr. Sidney S. Lenz and Mr. Wilbur C. Whitehead, nationally known bridge experts, supervised the play. In addition to the score prizes and table prizes there were numerous door prizes, also given by celebrities, so there was a goodly number of lucky people.

The party served to bring together in pleasant social contact friends of the National Board, members of the Review Committees and of the affiliated Better Films Committees in nearby communities, so from all angles it was a great success.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteeer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

FRANCES C. BARRETT
HELEN CAHILL

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience. *Pictures recommended for the family audience* (12 *years up*).

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience* (18 *years up*).

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

*—*Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays".*

Arizona Kid

Directed by ..... *Alfred Santell*
Featuring ..... *Warner Baxter*

Story "The Cisco Kid" by O. Henry

ROMANTIC tale of the West. The Arizona Kid masquerading as a wealthy and care-free Mexican is loved by many senoritas in the little village far up in the Rockies where he makes his home. A young Eastern girl and her brother come to the village and it is the Arizona Kid who befriends them only to be disillusioned in his new found friends. The beauty of the scenery and the acting of Warner Baxter make it an entertaining production.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

Around the Corner

Directed by ..... *Bert Glennon*
Featuring ..... *George Sidney*, *Charles Murray*

Screen story by Joe Swerling

ROSIE, the adopted daughter of a Jewish pawnbroker and his Irish pal, falls in love with a boy whom she believes to be a chauffeur. When she discovers he is the son of a wealthy man she decides to forget him but he has other plans for her. George Sidney and Charles Murray play with their usual ability the roles of the Jew and the Irishman respectively.

For the family audience.

(Columbia—7 reels)

The Bad One

Directed by ..... *George Fitzmaurice*
Featuring ..... *Dolores Del Rio*

Screen story by John Farrow

EDMUND LOWE is in his element here as the world's greatest lover who leaves his little Brooklyn playmates to go to sea in order to "give all the girls a break." But when he meets a lovely Spanish heartbreaker in a French cafe—the part is expertly played by the alluring Dolores Del Rio—he forgets all his former loves. Dark tragedy enters and all but wrecks their lives. In these latter scenes, the acting of both principals is excellent, Dolores Del Rio making a fine emotional appeal.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—8 reels)

The Big Fight

Directed by ..... *Walter Lang*
Featuring ..... *Guinn Williams*, *Lola Lane*

Play by David Belasco

HERE we have a film version of the stage play which was built around the characters of Jack Dempsey and his wife, Estelle Taylor, and played by them in New York City. The screen parts are well taken by

Lola Lane as the girl who refuses all bribes and threats urging her to have a part in causing her fiance, the fighter, to throw the fight and Guinn Williams as the fighter who has always fought straight and continues to do so. There are some thrilling scenes at the ringside with the enthusiastic crowd wildly cheering its favorite.

For the family audience.

(Sono Art—World Wide—7 reels)

*The Big Pond

Directed by ..... *Hobart Henley*
Featuring ..... *Maurice Chevalier*, *Claudette Colbert*

Play by George Middleton and A. E. Thomas

A CHARMING romance which begins in romantic Venice and ends in an unromantic chewing gum factory in America. The beautiful and spoiled daughter of an American chewing gum king falls in love with her European guide, Pierre and her father and fiance thinking her infatuation is due to the romantic surroundings offer Pierre a chance to make "good" in the American factory, which he accepts. There are many amusing situations and several songs sung in the one and only Chevalier manner. Claudette Colbert is fascinating as usual.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Born Reckless

Directed by ..... *John Ford*
Featuring ..... *Edmund Lowe*, *Catherine Dale Owen*

Novel "Louis Beretti" by Donald H. Clarke

A GANGSTER is drafted and goes to war. He determines to put his past life behind him and returns a hero, but he finds it is not so easy to rid himself of the past. Edmund Lowe as the suave and assuming reformed gangster is well supported by Catherine Dale Owen as his former sweetheart.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—8 reels)

Caught Short

Directed by ..... *Chas. F. Riesner*
Featuring ..... *Marie Dressler*, *Polly Moran*

Screen story by Willard Mack

WHEN Marie Dressler and Polly Moran get together, there is bound to be fun and here they have a picture all their own. They play the parts of boarding house mistresses, the best of friends but not above heated quarrels now and then. Especially does Marie resent Polly's high hat attitude after she has made a fortune in Wall Street. Marie immediately plunges into the stock market and makes a great clean-up, and how they strive to out-ritz each other! But they soon find that Wall Street is a very dangerous playground. The film is full of laughs, being suggested in part by Eddie Cantor's book "Caught Short."

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—8 reels)

Children of Pleasure

Directed by ..... *Harry Beaumont*
Featuring ..... *Lawrence Grey*

Screen story by Crane Wilbur

ROMANCE of a young song writer who realizes in time that true love means more than anything else. The role of the song writer is well played by Lawrence Grey who sings several numbers in his usual pleasing voice.

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Courage

Directed by ..... *Archie Mayo*
Featuring ..... *Belle Bennett*

Play by Tom Barry

A DRAMA of a mother's love and sacrifice for her children. In her endeavor to give her children all the advantages possible on a very meagre income the mother does not realize that in some ways it is most embarrassing for the children and she almost loses them. Belle Bennett is excellent in the role of the mother and she is ably supported by the children who all play their parts well. This film is based upon the popular Broadway play of last year in which the child actor, Junior Durkin was such a success.

For the family audience.

(Warner—7 reels)

The Cuckoos

Directed by ..... *Paul Sloane*
Featuring ..... *Bert Wheeler* / *Robert Woolsey*
Musical comedy "The Ramblers" by Guy Bolton, Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby

HERE is a mad film if there ever was one. There is hardly a sober moment in the whole picture but what can be expected when that hilarious comedy team, Woolsey and Wheeler, pile up laugh after laugh with their ridiculous nonsense. The film, which is an adaptation of the musical comedy, "The Ramblers", pays but slight attention to the plot—a very good thing—and is given over wholly to the comedy and the songs, all of which are tuneful and catchy. If you like lots of spontaneous nonsense *The Cuckoos* is the picture to see.

For the family audience.

(RKO—11 reels)

Czar of Broadway

Directed by ..... *William Craft*
Featuring ..... *John Wray* / *Betty Compson*
Screen story by Gene Towne

A CRIME story supposedly based upon the life of Arnold Rothstein. A young newspaper reporter is befriended by a gangster known as the "Czar of Broadway". When chance gives the lad an opportunity for his big "scoop" he refuses to besmirch his friend's memory.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—8 reels)

The Divorcee

Directed by ..... *Robert Leonard*
Featuring ..... *Norma Shearer*
Novel "Ex-Wife" by Ursula Parrott

THROUGH the excellent acting of Norma Shearer and the supporting cast, the more or less uninteresting story, "Ex-Wife," comes to the screen as an entertaining story of marriage and divorce. Jerry marries a young newspaper man and for three years they are blissfully happy and held by their friends as an example of all a young married couple should be. Their philosophy of the single standard does not hold good however when it effects themselves.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Double Crossroads

Directed by ..... *Alfred Warker*
Featuring ..... *Robert Ames* / *Lila Lee*
Story "Yonder Grow the Daisies" by Walter Lipman

AN underworld melodrama with several surprises. A young convict is released from prison and determines it is the straight and narrow henceforth for him. He goes to a small country town and there meets his ideal girl. His gang track him down, though, and promise if he does one more robbery they will not trouble him again. Thinking the girl has doublecrossed him he consents and more "doublecrossing" follows.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—6 reels)

Dumb-bells in Ermine

Directed by ..... *John G. Adolfi*
Featuring ..... *Robert Armstrong* / *Barbara Kent*
Play "Weak Sisters" by Lynn Stallings

HERE is another case of a fine cast making a film decidedly entertaining. Beryl Mercer is delightful in the part of the old lady who is so anxious to help her granddaughter and the nice young man who loves her in spite of her snobbish daughter-in-law's strenuous objections. The girl's suitor is a prize-fighter, a fact which shocks her mother considerably especially as she has her own plans as to whom her daughter is to marry. James Gleason gives his usual excellent performance as the young fighter's trainer who tries first to discourage the romance and then to help it along according to his own ideas as to the tactics a man should use to win a girl.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—6 reels)

The Fall Guy

Directed by ..... *Leslie Pearce*

Featuring .....Jack Mulhall
Play by George Abbott and James Gleason

UNABLE to obtain a job and pressed to support not only his wife but his sister and his wife's brother, a boy is finally forced to become a bootlegger. His sister is in love with a policeman and it is most embarrassing for him when he discovers that the man he is after is his sweetheart's brother. Much to the boy's surprise he finds out that he has been peddling dope instead of whiskey and he has quite a time proving his innocence. Comedy relief is furnish by the brother-in-law who sits at home continually playing on his saxophone while the others work.

For the mature audience.

(R K O—7 reels)

The Flirting Widow

Directed by .....William Seiter
Featuring ..... {Dorothy Mackaill / Basil Rathbone

Novel "Green Stockings" by A. E. W. Mason

THE old English custom of the unmarried daughters wearing green stockings at the weddings of their younger sisters causes much grief to the girl in question in this picture. Finally becoming thoroughly exasperated with her family for endeavoring to figuratively thrust her into the arms of every eligible person she invents a fiance who was killed in the war and needless to say the unknown fiance proves to be very much alive—thus creating many amusing complications.

For the family audience.

(First National—8 reels)

The Florodora Girl

Directed by .....Harry Beaumont
Featuring .....Marion Davies

Screen story by Gene Markey

A STORY of the gay nineties. An entertaining burlesque concerning the love affair of Daisy, a Florodora girl, and a wealthy young man whose mother has decided whom he shall marry. In spite of the warnings of her friends concerning this man of the world Daisy believes in him and thus all ends well. The story is most amusing and the costumes are in perfect keeping with the time.

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Fox Movietone Follies of 1930

Directed by .....Benjamin Stoloff
Featuring ..... {El Brendel / Margaret White

Screen story by William K. Wells

ANOTHER revue comes to the screen with its many stars. The plot is woven around the love affairs of an uncle and his nephew with two show girls. *The Fox Follies of* 1930 is a riot of color and tune, well produced and well acted.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—7 reels)

In Gay Madrid

Directed by.....Robert Leonard
Featuring .....Ramon Novarro
Novel "La Casa de la Troya" by Alejandro Perez Lugin

RAMON NOVARRO'S boyish smile and charming voice prove irresistible to the little senorita whom he loves in this picture of sunny Spain. But she decides it is best to keep him guessing until his dark past looms up and almost wrecks the romance. The film is a delightful piece with much light comedy and some fine singing, not only by Novarro but also by the students attending the University where he is sent. Dorothy Jordan is always a joy to behold and the other members of the cast do very good work, especially the boy's father.

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

* The King of Jazz

Directed by .....John Murray Anderson
Featuring..... {Paul Whiteman / Special Cast

ANOTHER lavish technicolor revue featuring Paul Whiteman and his famous band. The origin of the phrase "King of Jazz" starts off the revue with a most original touch and the rest of the show does not fall below the standard set. The picture abounds with catchy tunes, resplendent costumes and settings and humorous skits.

For the family audience.

(Universal—13 reels)

Ladies Love Brutes

Directed by ..... *Rowland V. Lee*
Featuring ..... *George Bancroft*
Play "Pardon My Glove" by Zoe Akins

THE drama of a self-made man. George Bancroft forcefully portrays the role of an Italian immigrant who has battled his way from an iron worker to a New York building contractor. With his wealth and fame comes a desire for social prestige which almost wrecks his and his son's life. Mary Astor and Fredric March ably support Mr. Bancroft.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

The Lady of Scandal

Directed by ..... *Sidney Franklin*
Featuring ..... *Ruth Chatterton*
Play "The High Road" by Frederick Lonsdale

WHATEVER the character portrayed Ruth Chatterton succeeds in making it a vital one. Here she plays effectively the part of a popular musical comedy star thrown into contact with an exceedingly conservative family of the English aristocracy through her announced engagement to the youngest member of the family. The council of all the relatives called to plan how best to divert this scandal decides upon the idea of inviting her for a trial visit in the household, thinking its severity will cause her to relent through boredom, results however, are unexpected and she leaves for quite different reasons. Basil Rathbone offers a finished role as the Duke. The atmospheric quality leaves little to be desired.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—8 reels)

Midnight Mystery

Directed by ..... *George B. Seitz*
Featuring ..... *Betty Compson*, *Lowell Sherman*
Play "Hawk Island" by H. I. Young

A TALE of a house-party on a lonely island which ends tragically. In order to try and arouse the guests whose chief occupation seems to be reading murder mystery stories, two members of the party put on a drama which would have been clever in dispelling the gloom if it had not been the basis for a real murder. One of the girls, who writes mysteries, the fiancee of the perpetrator of the plot, brings her knowledge of murder crimes to the aid of the accused and the guilty one is finally brought to justice.

For the mature audience.

(R K O—7 reels)

Not Damaged

Directed by ..... *Chandler Sprague*
Featuring ..... *Lois Moran*, *Robert Ames*
Story "The Solid Gold Article" by Richard Connell

BORED by her existence as a shop girl and with her fiance, a floor walker, a young girl determines to seek excitement with a wealthy young man to whom she has sold a quantity of shirts. Her fiance and roommate warn her of the dangers that will resort from this but she determines to learn through experience. The knowledge she does acquire concerning her acquaintances is wholly unexpected. The acting of Lois Moran is good.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—7 reels)

One Embarrassing Night

Directed by ..... *G. Walls*
Featuring ..... *Ralph Lynn*
Play "Rookery Nook" by Ben Travers

A COMEDY of English country life concerning a young bridegroom who has been forced to return home from his honeymoon without his bride because of her mother's illness. To the boy's dismay he finds a young girl making herself at home in his house and he has quite a hectic evening explaining or trying to explain her presence and his bride's absence. This English production is a very amusing picture.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer— 11 reels)

One Romantic Night

Directed by ..... *Paul Stein*
Featuring ..... *Lillian Gish*
Play "The Swan" by Ferenz Molnar

THIS story concerns a princess who because of her cool aloofness is called "the Swan". Her mother decides she must recoup the hopeless state of their once important family through the marriage of her daughter to the Crown Prince. The Crown

Prince, however, is a gay fellow with little relish for an obscure princess but changes his mind after a few hours in her company. Nevertheless the course of true love refuses to run smoothly through the princess' sudden aroused interest in the presentable tutor for her young brothers. In the end class distinctions are not ignored and the prince and princess are supposed to live happily ever after. Lillian Gish is quite demure in the princess role but this gives the dominating mother her chance. O. P. Heggie plays well the ever-helpful uncle, Father Benedict.

For the family audience.

(United Artists—8 reels)

* Paramount on Parade

A SPECTACULAR technicolor revue with many popular stars, gorgeous costumes and settings and numerous catchy tunes. The masters of ceremony provided unusual laugh-provoking humor but what could be expected with three such comedians as Jack Oakie, Leon Erroll and Skeets Gallagher. The picture moves rapidly from one colorful scene to another replete with singing, dancing, humor and clever skits.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—13 reels)

Pori

Directed by .....Baron A. Von Dugern

THIS film depicts a big game expedition in East Africa. An explorer, his wife and two children are befriended by a tribe of natives who protect them from another not so friendly tribe. The shots of the game hunting are most thrilling and the natives' dances and customs very interesting.

For the family audience.

(Ufa—6 reels)

The Return of Dr. Fu Manchu

Directed by .....Rowland V. Lee
Featuring .....Warner Oland

Novel by Sax Rohmer

WE left Dr. Manchu dead from poison that he had taken when capture by Scotland Yard proved inevitable in *The Mysterious Dr. Fu Manchu* but in this sequel we find him more alive than dead. He continues his nefarious schemes of revenge for the death of his wife and son in this second picture which continues to hold one's interest. Warner Oland repeats his stellar performance as the mysterious Oriental.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Roaring Ranch

Directed by .....Reeves Eason
Featuring .....Hoot Gibson

Screen story by Reeves Eason

A WESTERN in which the childhood romance of a boy and girl plays a large part. The followers of Hoot Gibson will enjoy seeing him in the role of foster father to a small baby and the lovers of animals will also find enjoyment in the many shots of pets and the kindness shown to them. This picture would be very good for a humane program. The story has plausibility which is usually lacking in most Westerns.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Universal—7 reels)

Safety in Numbers

Directed by .....Victor Schertzinger
Featuring .....Buddy Rogers

Screen story by George Marion, Jr.

COMEDY romance of a boy whose uncle has the bright idea that he will send him to New York to see the sights under the supervision of three Follies girls before he attains his majority and money, thus teaching him how to elude the city gold-diggers. The plan might have been successful but the old adage of "safety in numbers" does not hold true.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—10 reels)

The Second Floor Mystery

Directed by .....Roy del Ruth
Featuring .....Grant Withers, Loretta Young

Novel "The Agony Column" by Earl Derr Biggers

A GIRL and boy become acquainted through the "agony column" in a London daily and the boy desiring to make an impression weaves many adventures and romantic stories about himself which lead to his

embarrassment later. Grant Withers is good in the role of the lad who becomes entangled in a real murder through his imaginative crime tales.

For the family audience.

(Warner—6 reels)

Second Honeymoon

Directed by .....*Phil Rosen*
Featuring .....{*Josephine Dunn*, *Edward Earle*}

Novel by Ruby Ayres

AN entertaining light story of a discontented wife, a busy husband and a discarded lover. The wife believes she is in love with her former sweetheart and the method which is used to convince her of the folly of her way of thinking is most amusing.

For the mature audience.

(Continental—6 reels)

* So This Is London

Directed by .....*John Blystone*
Featuring .....*Will Rogers*

Play by George M. Cohan

AN excellent comedy of an American who hating everything British is forced to go to London on business. On board he and his wife are compelled to keep to their staterooms so there is ample time for their son to fall in love with an English girl thus giving more reason for animosity and ire on the part of his father when they arrive in London and the two families meet. There is sufficient cause to believe that many of the clever and pungent lines are original ones of America's congressman at large. Clever dialogue and the excellent acting make this an unusually entertaining picture.

For the family audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

Soldiers and Women

Directed by .....*Edward Sloan*
Featuring .....{*Helen Johnson*, *Grant Withers*}

Play by Paul Irving Fox and George Curtin

DRAMA of army post life in Haiti. A captain of the post is murdered so naturally the plot concerns the question "who and why?" The suspected ones are a young officer who is in love with the murdered man's wife and the Colonel's lady, well portrayed by Aileen Pringle. The heat and the monotony of the island post has preyed on the latter's mind so that she feels she is capable of most any crime. A recent newcomer to the screen, a lovely blonde of the Ann Harding type, Helen Johnson, charmingly plays the part of the young wife who unravels the mystery.

For the mature audience.

(Columbia—7 reels)

Song of the Flame

Directed by .....*Anton F. Grot*
Featuring .....{*Bernice Claire*, *Alexander Gray*}

Operetta by Oscar Hammerstein II and Otto Harbach

COLOR and sound happily blended in a stirring operetta of the Russian revolution. The plot centers around a beautiful country girl who expresses the grumbling of the peasants through her ardent song of freedom so that she becomes their leader. Plotting chiefs of the revolution make use of her influence over the people for their unscrupulous personal gains and too late she discovers the power of the flame she has kindled by her song. Her refusal to work with the revolutionists longer and her love for a prince place her in an unfortunate position all of which is righted in the finale. The singing is very good, especially worth noting is a song by Noah Beery who plays the chief of the revolutionists. Several gay harvest dances of the people add to the colorfulness of this lavish picture.

For the family audience.

(First National—9 reels)

Sunny Skies

Directed by.....*Norman Taurog*
Featuring .....{*Benny Rubin*, *Marceline Day*}

Screen story by A. P. Younger

A STORY of campus life based chiefly on the efforts of a Jewish boy to become a real college sport. There is, of course, the necessary football game won at the last minute by the college hero and the happy ending for all involved in the plot. There are several good music hits and the buffoonery of Benny Rubin is amusing.

For the family audience.

(Tiffany—8 reels)

Sweethearts and Wives

Directed by ..... *Clarence Badger*
Featuring ..... *Billy Dove*, *Clive Brook*

Play by Walter Hackett

BELIEVING herself in love with her husband's friend a young wife soon changes her mind when she is forced to spend a night in a spooky and deserted inn with a storm raging outside. Many mysterious things happen concerning lost jewels and a divorce lawyer who will have information for his client at any cost.

For the mature audience.

(First National—9 reels)

* Swing High

Directed by ..... *Joseph Santley*
Featuring ..... *Fred Scott*, *Helen Twelvetrees*

Screen story by Joseph Santley and James Seymour

THIS picture proves to be one of the best circus musical films. All the glamor of circus parades, steam calliopes and the glitter that went with "circus day" in a small town is brought to the screen. Fred Scott is entertaining in his role as ticket seller who sings several good numbers and Helen Twelvetrees is charming as the trapeze artist. Stepin Fetchit as the animal hostler adds to the comedy relief. All in all it is a most amusing picture.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—10 reels)

The Texan

Directed by ..... *John Cromwell*
Featuring ..... *Gary Cooper*, *Fay Wray*

Story "A Deep-Dyed Deceiver" by O. Henry

THE hero of *The Virginian* is forced to flee from the Southwest, in this companion picture, to the romantic Argentine. Here he indeed encounters romance as well as wealth and at last peace. Gary Cooper does excellent work as the hero of the popular O. Henry story and is supported by Fay Wray as the beautiful senorita who wins his heart.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Those Who Dance

Directed by ..... *William Beaudine*
Featuring ..... *Monte Blue*, *Lila Lee*

Screen story by George K. Turner

A CROOK drama—this time concerning silk thieves. A young boy is caught with a gun on him after an officer has been killed trying to stop a silk truck. He is condemned to death but his sister has a plan for discovering the real criminal, assisted by the brother of the murdered policeman.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—7 reels)

Trigger Tricks

Directed by ..... *Reaves Eason*
Featuring ..... *Hoot Gibson*

Screen story by Reaves Eason

A TALE of the West with cowboys and cattle rustlers galore. A young boy, to avenge the death of his brother, hires himself to a girl as a ranger and to the gang of rustlers as a killer. He proves his courage and wins the praise of the sheriff and the love of the girl. A clever story with pleasing scenery and fast riding.

For the family audience.

(Universal—6 reels)

True to the Navy

Directed by ..... *Frank Tuttle*
Featuring ..... *Clara Bow*, *Fredric March*

Screen story by Keene Thompson and Doris Anderson

COMEDY of a girl who serves sodas to the lads of the fleet. In endeavoring to obtain a lot of trade for her employer, Ruby, this girl behind the fountain, becomes rather much entangled when the whole fleet enters the harbor since she has had only one ship to concern herself with heretofore. This production moves rapidly with plenty of humor.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Women Everywhere

Directed by ..... *Alexander Corda*
Featuring ..... *J. Harold Murray*, *Fifi Dorsay*

Screen story by George Groffsmith

DRAMA of love, gun-running and the regeneration of a man. After being arrested for gun-running, a man is aided by a cabaret girl and thus is able to escape. He joins the Foreign Legion and returning a hero seeks the girl, but time has passed and difficulties have arisen.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—8 reels)

Young Desire

Directed by .....*Lew Collins*
Featuring .....*Mary Nolan*
Story "Carnival" by William R. Doyle

A DRAMA of carnival life. A young girl runs away from the sordid life she has been living and on the road is befriended by a young college boy. He takes her home with him and announces that he is leaving college to marry, but the young people find that life is not so easy for them. The acting of Mary Nolan is excellent and one feels glad that an impossible ending is not tacked on.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—7 reels)

Young Man of Manhattan

Directed by .....*Monta Bell*
Featuring .....*Claudette Colbert*, *Norman Foster*
Novel by Katharine Brush

SMOOTH direction and fine acting has made the picturization of this popular novel a most entertaining one. Norman Foster plays the part of the sports writer, with plenty of literary talent but no ambition, who marries the young newspaper woman, ambitious as she is lovely, and, since Claudette Colbert plays the part, this indicates that she aimed very high indeed. Relations between the young couple in a very short time become strained and they separate but a highly dramatic turn of events brings them together again.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

(*Continued from page* 15)

sometimes. But we soon found that they liked boxing and wrestling and bowling and basket ball and all vigorous kinds of athletic activities. Eventually we found our way out of the woods into a program that went along smoothly and satisfied a real need for recreation in that special type of community.

You have to plan your recreation to balance up the program for the folks it is designed for, and whether it is young boys and girls or old boys and girls, it is a matter of study and thought and understanding. When you come to apply it to motion pictures, I wonder if we must not think more carefully and sympathetically of pictures suited to the adolescent age.

The motion pictures are made on a pretty dead level. Producers are not making pictures exclusively for children because they would not pay the cost of production. Yet many of the current productions are fine for the whole family. Pictures need to have a recreational and entertainment value that will carry over the whole range of interest of both young people and adults.

I wish to reiterate that I believe that just as in selecting our foods, we have to give more attention to our recreations. We would not think of turning the children into the pantry and leaving them to their own devices with jam and mince pie. Why then should we allow them, during the time when we do exercise some degree of control over them, to go to a miscellaneous and haphazard program of recreation such as must come in the usual neighborhood motion picture house? With the information now available about pictures, let us do some selecting and planning, and yet not be too dictatorial about it. Let us just talk it out—what are the interesting pictures and the most worth-while—and then see them with the children.

I am awfully sorry for boys and girls who are not allowed to see motion pictures, as some are not, but I would be more sorry for boys and girls allowed to go to the movies whenever and wherever they wanted to. So it is selection and moderation and a "balanced ration" of motion pictures that is the answer to the problem, if happily we are wise enough and sympathetic enough to do it.

WE are sorry but at the same time we hope that you missed the May issue of our Magazine. To those who have looked in vain for it we extend our apologies and say "here it is" combined with the June issue. Since it is fuller we trust that we may ask your forgiveness regarding the unavoidable doubling-up.—*The Editors.*

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council, as an aid in carrying out these purposes, furnishes an information service through its various publications.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. V, No. 7 September, 1930

A Sociologist Says

Setting The Stage

Lon Chaney

How The Junior Matinee Came

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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A Sociologist Says

Our "Who's Who" presenting to our readers the members of the National Board of Review, including first the Executive Committee, introduces this month one known to many of you, Professor LeRoy E. Bowman.—EDITOR'S NOTE.

A MORALIZER who probes around in the realms of sin in order to have something to preach about must sometimes get a thrill that is direct and genuine. And the student of social science taking part in the observation and criticism of the movies in order to discover original sociological data must confess to a great deal of personal pleasure quite apart from erudite researches in the occupation. I am interested in the movies because I enjoy them; I tell others I spend time at the pictures because others enjoy them and as a student and teacher of sociology (especially social problems) at Columbia University, I must watch the social processes of mass response. What holds the attention of the many in story and song is of greater significance than statistics for one who wishes to know what this society is and how it works. Not that the movies are adequately picturing American society—they are not, for as yet they are an art greater in that respect in their possibilities than accomplishment. Further the United States of America is not yet very integrated as a society and hence what the movies show is something confused, something crude and elemental.

Prof. LeRoy E. Bowman

The pictures on the films give form in which the stuff in many minds nucleates into mental pictures. Into these pictures in peoples heads they put themselves and thus they influence their own ideas of the relation they bear to others. They are superior or inferior; they act in an ethical, decent or social way toward others partly as they have painted the image of

themselves in these mental pictures. There is not much logic in the process, nor deductive conclusions regarding right and wrong, but there is a tremendous feeling of being right because actions happen to agree with these hazy, egoistic, haphazard mind images that motion pictures have a part in creating. If the reader believes any of the argument so far it will not be difficult for him to see how a person who likes most those people in this world who get the worst of things will be interested in anything such as movies that aid observers to form helpful or unfair pictures of their relation to the underdogs.

In the same way attitudes toward all people are assumed, not reasoned. We like or dislike, we are fair or unfair, to business acquaintances, neighbors, foreigners or those religiously or morally different from ourselves according to curious influences that operate without rhyme or reason. Then we use logic to defend and support the prejudices we have illogically assumed. At least this poor statement of a big fact intimately relates to the work of community organizations in which for many years I have enjoyed speculating as secretary of the National Community Center Association, as editor of the community section of "Social Forces," for a time as chairman of the community section of the National Conference of Social Work, for five years as organizer and director of a neighborhood association, and during the War as national personnel director of War Camp Community Service.

It would be a simple task to carry on some such line of generalizing about the movies and the way they relate themselves to the interests of the individual; for example to my job as secretary of the New York City Recreation Committee which unites fifty-five organizations in a civic and fairly successful effort to formulate a long term program and policies for New York in the provision of playgrounds and public recreation. However, anyone who has read this far has lost interest in the personal references and has carried the implications of the general argument much beyond these feeble paragraphs. That was inevitable, however, and those who arranged these "Who's Who" articles must have realized that skeleton biographical boasts are most uninteresting to read, and autobiography painful to write; for the author feels so much as tourists should feel who carry bags with labels blazoning European cities they have "toured" to no one's interest but their own.

At any rate here are a few labels on my portfolio: member, Welfare Council of New York City; member of Executive Committee of the Teachers Union; member, National and New York City Executive Committees League for Industrial Democracy; active in the cooperative (Rochdale) movement and in adult education.

Further information regarding Professor Bowman we append to complete the above. —The Editor.

Professor Bowman is an alumnus of the University of Chicago and did graduate work in sociology at Columbia University. He was one of the organizers of a settlement for men and boys, South Deering, Chicago; organizer and director of the Greenpoint Neighborhood Association in Brooklyn for five years, conducting three playgrounds, two community centers, a civic and naturalization center, organized health work and so forth. Assistant secretary, New York State Committee on Feeblemindedness for one year, assistant executive officer, New York County Chapter, American Red Cross. Organized and for seven years secretary, New York City Recreation Committee. Past president, New York Monday Club, consisting of the social workers of New York City. Member, executive committee, Pioneer Youth of America. For nine years lecturer in sociology, Columbia University. He is a writer on community organization, social problems, cooperation, adult education, recreation and related subjects.

Setting the Stage

Outstanding Indian Film "The Silent Enemy" Offers Tie-up Suggestions

By Betty Shannon

THE distinguished stage designer, Robert Edmond Jones, told me in an interview not long ago of a Russian book, new at the time, which pointed out the fact that all life is becoming "theatricalized." In other words that the arts of stage design, of dramatization and presentation known to the showman are becoming utilized in home and social life, in religious and educational fields, in advertising and merchandizing.

Even the kitchen, today, with its colored pots and pans looks like a stage set. The modern woman "makes a setting" for her individuality, carefully choosing colors, fabrics and furniture which will enhance her own particular charms. Many women base their knowledge of interior decoration on the settings they have seen in pictures.

Business men "stage" their big deals. They have come to see the importance of decorating their offices to furnish a background which silently contributes to the "single effect" they are trying to attain of dignity, success and power.

The merchant with something to sell "dramatizes" his merchandise. He does this by presenting a little story or scene which will utilize what he has for sale in the way it would naturally be used after purchase.

The chairman of the Better Films Committee, borrowing the window of a local storekeeper to call the attention of the passing public to some special Community Night at a co-operating picture theatre by the reproduction of a scene from the selected picture to be shown is joining in this modern trend of "theatricalization" of life. So is the Librarian or the Museum Director, when he helps to inform the public of some unusually good picture—such as, let us say, that very distinguished screen story of the American Indian recently released by Paramount, *The Silent Enemy*—by making a display of photographic stills from the picture with books and related objects of interest.

The motion picture exhibitor has from practically the first "dramatized" his efforts to make the public part with the cost of admission at his box office. One definition of "dramatization" is "to tell a story through action." And that is a good definition here, I think. Though his efforts were at first as crude as his product, the exhibitor frequently had the right idea of attracting attention when he told the public the story of what he was presenting through parades, floats, and through such stunts as having local actors pretending to be involved in situations like the action of the plot discovered by the press.

There is a brilliance and a finesse apparent in the exploitation of pictures today which was not to be found before competition had driven those producing and exploiting them to obtain every ounce of business possible out of every picture. Also, before the days when banks and bankers began coming into the field and demanding exact figures and analyses based on thorough understanding of the elements making up the strange phenomenon known as the motion picture business.

Many—if not most—of the ideas used in the advertising and exploiting of motion pictures even by theatre exhibitors today are worked out in the advertising and promotion departments of the motion picture producers and are submitted in the forms of press sheets and advertising manuals along with the film.

The thoroughness with which each production is scanned for its high lights, its points of interest and the appeals which will make selling talks to different types of audi-

ences could not have been dreamed of a dozen years ago.

An executive in the advertising department of one of the big motion picture producing companies, which owns a chain of theatres, bore out this contention that all business was becoming theatricalized in a statement the other day relating to department personnel. He said that so keen had competition become for attention, with every motion picture company and every other type of business dramatizing its product, that his company had considered it advisable to have young men in the advertising department who had studied playwriting and stagecraft, to plan and execute, when necessary its exploitations. Because of this, his company had sent for several years to New Haven and Cambridge for young men who had taken courses in playwriting at Yale and Harvard to be trained for work at the home office or in the theatres.

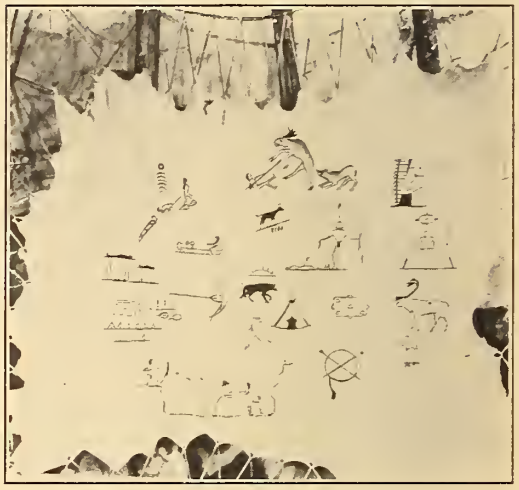
He stated that this specialized training, which had direct application to the work, he felt to be very desirable.

One of the best examples of an intelligently handled advertising and exploitation campaign and one which has wide appeal to the American public because of the subject matter of the picture is that of *The Silent Enemy* which I have mentioned above.

This picture being the epic life story of a race and based on fact—though as thrilling as any fiction—is different from the usual output of the studios, and thus special thought and effort was put on the formulating of ideas for its exploitation. A thirty-two page Advertising Manual full of suggestions was the result.

Perhaps the most delightful exploitation "stunt" and one which represents the new, high type of work which is being done in this line today, is a "Map Reading Contest" outlined in this Manual. The contest is to be carried on in the lobby of any of the theatres showing *The Silent Enemy*.

Those who have seen the picture remember the fascinating scene in which the hero records in picture-writing the history of the deeds performed in the film on a map made of animal hide. A picture of the map is reproduced on this page. This map suggested the "Map Reading Contest" idea.



And this is it: The theatre manager is to get a large hide similar to the one used in the picture, and to invite local Boy Scouts, always interested in Indian lore, to paint the hide exactly like the photograph, in the lobby of the theatre. The hide is then to be left hanging in the lobby for several days, while the Contest rules are printed in the newspapers, and the good news of the prize awards are circulated. All boys and girls under sixteen years of age in the city or town are invited to take part in the contest.

Those who enter the contest must see the picture and then from memory explain the significance of the drawings on the Indian Story Map which the Boy Scouts have made. The explanations are to be written at a large table equipped with writing paper and pencils in the lobby near the map. After the closing of the picture the papers will be judged by prominent adult members of the community and the prizes awarded.

Might it not be interesting for members of the National Board of Review Study Groups to take up the matter of theatre advertising and exploitation, which includes the fascinating subject of "tie-ups." But perhaps you have done so already.

Lon Chaney

From "The Unholy Three"

LON CHANEY, whose death occurred as suddenly and as startingly as he sometimes emerged in his macabre pictures, presents a loss to the screen wnich will not easily be filled. His talents were extraordinarily varied, his way of life was distinguished and dignified and his contribution to the screen was continuous and progressive.

Chaney was both an actor of high calibre, an outstanding pantomimist and a master of the art of make-up. In this last field he was considered so authoritative that he was called upon by the editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica to write an article on this subject.

One of the secrets of Chaney's success was that he labored unflaggingly in his chosen field. Every role he undertook was a new contribution, an attempt at a fresh interpretation. He never allowed himself to be typed. For that reason he was never pocketed, never set to work in the weary treadmill of reproducing his previous performances until a bored public might throw him upon the scrap heap of its disfavor.

The outstanding quality of Chaney's work is amply illustrated by the record of selections made by the National Board of Review. Of the twenty-five pictures in which he appeared since 1919 when he first came to the fore in *The Miracle Man* the following eighteen were selected:

Flesh and Blood.....1922
A Blind Bargain.....1922
The Hunchback of Notre Dame.....1923
The Shock.....1923
He Who Gets Slapped.....1924
The Unholy Three.....1925
The Monster.....1925
The Phantom of the Opera.....1925
The Tower of Lies.....1925
The Black Bird.....1926
Tell It to the Marines.....1926
Mr. Wu.....1927
The Unknown.....1927
Mockery.....1927
London After Midnight.....1927
West of Zanzibar.....1928
Where East Is West.....1929
Thunder.....1929

The following were chosen as exceptional pictures and were reviewed at length in the National Board of Review Magazine:

The Hunchback of Notre Dame
He Who Gets Slapped
The Phantom of the Opera
The Tower of Lies

This unusual record of excellence speaks for itself. It is further borne out by his great favor with the motion picture public. The popular imagination was soon captured by Chaney's uncanny resourcefulness in the realm of grotesque make-up. He early carried the descriptive epithet of "the man with a thousand faces" and his ability to as-

(*Continued on page* 8)

Exceptional Photoplays

COMMITTEE

Louise W. Hackney
Rita C. McGoldrick
Harriet Menken
Frances T. Patterson
J. K. Paulding
Clarence A. Perry
Walter W. Pettit
M. R. Werner

A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

Wilton A. Barrett

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

THE absence of any reviews in the Exceptional Photoplays Department of this issue of the Magazine is due not to a lack of good pictures but we might say "blame it on the weather" for during the summer heat of New York City the members of the Exceptional Photoplays Committee have all sought more comfortable temperatures. It has been impossible therefore to bring the pictures referred by the Review groups to the Exceptional Photoplays Committee before the Committee for consideration.

Those pictures which have been referred as worthy of longer reviews and special support are *Abraham Lincoln, Hell's Angels, Old English* and *Romance*. Attention is called to these films as starred in the Selected Pictures Department of this issue. Perhaps they may appear in the Exceptional Photoplays Department of the next number but even without this further recommendation they are pictures not to be missed by discriminating theatre patrons.

Lon Chaney

(*Continued from page 7*)

sume disguises originated a series of nationally known jokes about mistaken identities.

Yet Chaney was never for the moment a mere make-up trickster. In *The Tower of Lies* based upon the novel by Selma Lagerlof he rose to tragic heights as a bereaved father who goes insane over his daughter's downfall and in *Tell It to the Marines* he showed that he could play a straight part on his own merits.

Next to Chaplin, Chaney was the leading film actor to take an uncomprising stand against talking pictures. He felt that though he might assume a thousand fabled faces on the silent screen he had only one voice for the talkies. Yet when he finally had to succumb in a talking version of *The Unholy Three* it was characteristic of his genius that he acted with no less than four voices. It is our great loss that we will never know how many voices he still had at his command.

Alfred B. Kuttner.

ACCORDING to The London Daily Telegraph, the problem of "Where do old French films go?" has been settled with the discovery in Paris of a second-hand film market. Not far from the Gare de l'Est is a place where it is possible to buy old films at ten francs the meter. They are bought by traveling showmen and the managers of cinemas in out-of-the-way places in Madagascar, Senegal and the Congo. A complete picture play, a short one, it is true, can be had for a little over a dollar, while more ambitious pieces, such as *L'Homme a la Rolls-Royce*, which has a roll of film extending to 1,200 meters, can be bought for about ten dollars.

Prominent Educators Become Title Writers

IF, as has so often been said, films have not been more widely used in the schools for visual education purposes because they are made without the supervision of those experienced in teaching and teaching methods and without relation to definite school courses, then there is need for encouragement in regard to a recent development. For during the past year a number of noted school authorities have been giving time and thought to the titling of a series of films for classroom use. Among those doing this work are: Paul G. Mann, Associate in Education, American Museum of Natural History, New York City; Joseph Hennessy and J. J. Quinn of Teachers' College, Boston, Mass.; Esther L. Berg, Assistant Principal of Public Schools, New York City; Clinton L. Baker and Dr. F. H. Pike of Columbia University; Prof. J. G. Swafford, Ph.D., L.H.D., DSc.; George C. Wood, James Monroe High School, New York City; A. Hadley, National Association of Audubon Societies, New York City, and Harry G. Barber, De Witt Clinton High School, New York City.

These educators have supervised from the long list of Ufa scientific subjects the preparation of a large number of films which are now ready for schoolroom use. Both lecture accompaniment and subtitles have been provided thus making the films usable for schools having either sound or silent projection facilities. And as the films are available on both standard width and narrow stock, every type of school can be supplied. This series is known as the Ufa Super-Educational Films and includes a variety of interesting subjects on astronomy, nature study, geography, etc. Many other of the Ufa films are being titled at present. Those interested in bringing to their communities the finest in available films in all fields may put this information before their school authorities and work with them in support of this modern way of teaching. Further word of this series and of many other educational films can be learned by writing to this office where a new list of educational films arranged by subject is now in the making.

Visual Aids

THE National Board was pleased to present as a speaker at its Annual Conference several years ago Dr. Joseph J. Weber, an authority on the subject of visual education. Dr. Weber interested himself in this field for a number of years while teaching at the Universities of Texas and Arkansas, then with the Teaching Film Staff at the Eastman Kodak Company before going to his present work at Valparaiso University where he occupies the chair of professor in the department of education and psychology. From his experiences and investigations he has contributed to the subject of visual instruction a number of valuable publications. The latest entitled "Visual Aids in Education" is a comprehensive treatment on the merit of the subject and the materials at hand. While the book is intended primarily for school officials and teachers it will be of value to Better Films Committee members who wish to be well informed regarding visual education, one important angle of committee activity. Cooperation with the schools is rated high as a Better Films Committee contact and whether visual education is or is not a part of the school work this compilation of Dr. Weber's will provide a worth while study for any Better Films group anxious to be up-to-date on a matter of significance in motion picture uses of the day. The mimeograph edition bound in flexible cover is available at $2.00 from the Educational Screen, 5 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Affiliated Committee members may borrow this book from the National Board of Review library.

BETTER FILMS FORUM

EDITOR: BETTINA GUNCZY

Department of the Better Films National Council

How the Junior Matinee Came

By MRS. FRANKLIN F. RUSSELL

It is a pleasure to pass on to our readers this story of an inspiration and an accomplishment sent to us by Mrs. Russell in response to a request to "tell all about" the successful junior matinees in her community.—EDITOR'S NOTE.

SEVERAL months ago in a small community not far from New York City, over a cup of tea, two busy women—busy mothers as well—expressed their appreciation of this moment's "breathing space." When comparing the many activities of the week, each discovered that the other was planning and managing a trip to the city with her children to secure for them the proper motion picture entertainment, which meant great strain to the budget as well as physical strain to each little group. In process of the conversation, it was found that there were other mothers feeling the urge to seek suitable entertainment for their children which neither pocket-book nor domestic arrangements would permit. In many cases there were younger babes at home who could not be left for so long a time.

"Why not bring some good programs right here to our fine moving picture theatre?" said one. Ah! here was an idea. "Let's take this energy expended in the effort of going to town and apply it to procuring programs to be given in our own theatre."

So these two women betook themselves to the next Woman's Club meeting and presented their plan for Children's Matinees. It met with enthusiastic response—"Go to it! We will help you all we can."

Very promptly a scheme was devised to ask all the club, school and church organizations in the surrounding territory by careful questionnaire if they would care to be affiliated with this project. The replies were prompt and interesting, a great majority in the affirmative, some few in the negative. Next an approach was made to our motion picture theatre manager. And here let us state we were most fortunate for, although this theatre puts on only the best pictures of the season and to satisfied audiences in full houses, the manager instantly understood our eagerness to provide for the children of the community Junior Matinees. True, he felt it might not be a financial success, but to "make expenses" was all he asked. If we could reach a large group, ten cents per child would be adequate admission. We next surrounded ourselves with a group of able helpers to assist with the publicity work and launched within two weeks our first Saturday Junior Matinee at ten o'clock in the morning showing Barrie's *Peter Pan*.

We admit, when Saturday morning arrived, we counted the children who might possibly come to the picture. We trembled lest a blizzard descend upon us! We thought of Mary and Jane and perhaps John, who lived next door, who after all might come. So off we trudged, hoping for at least a "make expenses" crowd. As we neared the theatre we saw the line, a long line—lo and behold!—and every seat was filled. Eight hundred sturdy youth of the vicinity and outlying districts attended that first performance of our Saturday Junior Matinee.

A more enthusiastic, responsive audience

had never been seen at the theatre, such whole-hearted laughter over the comedy, such appreciation of the educational subject *The Little Swiss Wood Carver* and such hand-clapping when Peter Pan asks all to clap who believe in fairies, that little Tinker Bell who drank the poison to save Peter from a dreadful fate might be brought back to life. The battle between the children and pirates on the pirate ship drew an interesting reaction for the point was not lost upon this audience, that courage, fearless loyalty and noble thoughts cleared the ship of wickedness and set it free to sail forever on the sea and through the air to happiness.

A very careful method of advertising was followed. The schoolrooms were notified and the teachers welcomed the use of the brochure published by the Pathe Educational Department on foreign lands, animal life and other subjects, using the moving picture for composition work.

Steadily onward the project moved until our last performance in June, each matinee a success. After the vacation season the matinees will be continued for our movie-minded adult population realize that our children are movie-minded too. We have had hostesses at each Junior Matinee, while representatives of the Fire Department and the Police Department and Boy and Girl Scouts have assisted with ushering and with street and parking traffic. Occasionally a tiny child has become bored and required extra amusement from a hostess so that the older brother or sister might enjoy the pictures.

The attendance soon reached more than one thousand. Then we were asked to tell about the Children's Movies at public gatherings. A nearby town wanted to start them in order to advertise and build up its local theatre patronage. A news-reel company took moving pictures of our young audience, which we particularly welcomed. Now for another side of our story.

The list of available films for children was fast being depleted and much to our chagrin and disappointment, in so relatively short a period, we practically exhausted the supply. It did not seem possible to us that producers were forgetting that the children, the audience of the future, needed entertainment. And what a rare opportunity is offered in the motion picture to rally the forces of science and art in behalf of children for their education and amusement. So, now a plea—

Children's Matinees can be successful. So please, O Producer, remember how glad you would have been, when a boy, to have had good moving pictures portraying fine riding, fine sportmanship, etc., to see and dream about. Help for the moment with retakes of delightful old films, those stories beloved of all children, for be assured, youthful audiences are here to stay.

We hope and we believe from advance announcement of production for the 1930-1931 *season that Mrs. Russell's plea will be answered.*—EDITOR'S NOTE.

THE Jacksonville (Fla.) Better Films Council has for so long conducted successful Junior Matinees that they feel there is nothing new to tell but there are always groups starting the work and it is to them a great help to learn from the methods of more experienced groups what it is that makes for successful matinees. A summer visit of Mrs. James A. Craig of the Jacksonville Council reminded us to do what we had had in mind for some weeks to do—ask Mrs. E. B. Smith, Chairman of the Junior Matinee Committee, regarding her Junior Matinees. Here is her helpful response: "It is hard to write you anything new about our Junior Matinees but we are carrying on as we always have, trying to keep up-to-date with pictures, prologues and everything. We have a splendid committee, Mrs. J. O. Holden, Chairman of Chaperones, Mrs. W. H. Burns, Chairman of Prologues and as you know, I am the general chairman. We have a fitting program for each and every special holiday, especially patriotic ones, always

have a feature, educational, serial or comedy and a splendid prologue. Our special matinees this year have been on Washington's birthday, Easter, Mother's Day, Flag Day and the Fourth of July. At Christmas and Easter one of our big stores buys out the matinee and invites all the children of the city as guests. They receive prizes and favors. As a sample program, our Flag Day matinee was the following feature, *College* with Buster Keaton, educational — interesting film on the telephone, serial—4th episode of *Tarzan the Tiger,* prologue—tableaux given by the Boy Scouts of Troup 5. Each tableau depicted one of the correct usages of the flag. This was followed with the salute to the flag by Scouts and audience, and the singing of the Star Spangled Banner and other patriotic songs."

The new officers of the Jacksonville Council are: Mr. W. M. Marr, president; Mr. J. F. Marron and Rev. A. M. Blackford, vice-presidents; Mrs. D. R. Lauderback, corresponding secretary; Mrs. D. C. Maner, recording secretary; Mrs. J. H. Howard, treasurer; Mrs. E. B. Smith, junior matinee committee chairman; Mrs. Leslie E. Jones, exceptional photoplays chairman; Mrs. Fred Evans, review chairman; Mr. Harwood Rosser, publicity chairman; Mrs. C. Herbert Purdy, program chairman and Mrs. J. O. Holden, extension chairman.

The Spartanburg (S. C.) Better Films Committee held its annual election of officers at the July meeting in the Franklin Hotel. Mrs. N. Irving Hyatt was re-elected chairman and Mrs. A. E. Woody was elected assistant vice-chairman. General discussions for the betterment of production and prospects for the renewal of the Children's Matinees were held. Mr. Hugh Smart, manager of the Spartanburg theatres was present and assisted the committee in working out certain problems.

THE Cleveland Cinema Club after a successful year, in which both membership and funds were increased, held its election in May and now looks forward to another successful year as all the incoming officers have held past offices in the Club or have been members of long standing and bring much enthusiasm and interest to their new duties. The officers are: Mrs. Frank J. Yeager, president; Mrs. Thomas Wood, vice-president; Mrs. Walter V. Magee, recording secretary; Mrs. William Hein, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Louis Zettlemeyer, treasurer; Mrs. B. H. Martin, auditor; Mrs. W. J. MacLachlan, publicity chairman and Mrs. Karl Bender, review committee chairman. They were welcomed into office at a luncheon given at the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce on June 18th.

Meetings have been dispensed with during the summer but meanwhile the Club has not been inactive as a series of garden parties are being held to add to the funds available for the work.

The Publicity Chairman has succeeded in making arrangements with the Chamber of Commerce to hold the Club meetings regularly in the Chamber of Commerce rooms in the new Terminal Tower Building and they expect to get, she writes, the full endorsement of this organization for their work. Mrs. MacLachlan's report of further plans states that "Prominent educators and public officials are being interested in the activities of the Club. Connections with the newspapers have been pleasant and much publicity for the social side of the work has been found but we are just beginning to get more recognition for the working side of the Club from the critics and newspapers, some of whom have co-operated beautifully with Mrs. Bender, Review Committee Chairman. I have written to all the theatre managers and critics, thanking them for their courtesies this past year and hoping for a continua-

tion of our pleasant relations. We have made plans for some very well-known people to talk to us this year and I am anxious to get different managers to speak to us also. We are inviting them and the critics to some of our later meetings."

THE Atlanta (Ga.) Better Films Committee at its annual election chose as the new president, Mrs. Patrick Bray, who has served the past term as second vice-president. Mrs. Bray in a charmingly frank letter to us writes: "I have always been content to reach the vice-presidency in all organization work sidestepping anything higher . . . but this time I slipped. However, with such splendid support from one of the finest executive boards in existence, and the help of my good friend, Mrs. Alonzo Richardson (Secretary of the local Board of Review), I really should have a successful administration. I am hoping so." We believe that her hope has every indication of being fulfilled judging from activity and response so far under her presidency.

A luncheon at the Hotel Ainsley in Atlanta on June 27th marked Mrs. Bray's entry into her new duties. Mrs. Bray presiding, introduced the newly appointed officers and committee chairmen of the organization and briefly outlined the future program for the group. The officers are in addition to Mrs. Bray, Mrs. Roy K. Smith, first vice-president; Dr. Witherspoon Dodge, second vice-president; Mrs. A. W. Waldman, recording secretary; Mrs. A. C. Whitehead, corresponding secretary; Mrs. O. K. Dinkler, treasurer and Mrs. N. C. Wing, parliamentarian.

Two paragraphs from Mrs. Bray's report at the luncheon give an idea of summer activity.

"While we have a great deal of work we also have many pleasures as members of this Committee. During the last month two very delightful courtesies have been extended to us—the entire committee being entertained as guests of the Capitol Theatre through the kindness of Mr. Carter F. Barron, Manager, at the splendid production of Marie Dressler and Polly Moran in *Caught Short* and at the Fox where Mr. Newton and Mr. Goodwin gave us the rare privilege of seeing Will Rogers in *So This Is London.* It is a great pleasure for the Committee to attend a picture together and we are most grateful to these managers for this courtesy. We know of members who enjoyed these pictures so much they went back the second time taking others with them."

"This Committee is intensely interested in the 'Toytown' Review with more than one hundred child performers, many being Atlanta children, presenting a benefit show at the Capitol Theatre for the Scottish Rite Crippled Children's Milk Fund, sponsored by the Atlanta Masonic Club, which is being given in addition to the regular program *The Floradora Girl* starring Marion Davies. We ask every member of this Committee who has not already attended the Capitol this week to go before the week is ended and to induce others to go, as this is a performance which should be attended by our Committee one hundred percent. The very words 'Benefit for Crippled Children' is all the advertising it should need."

It was decided at the June meeting that the Committee would not hold a meeting in July but a number of theatre parties have brought the members together. One being held on July 22nd when Committee members were entertained in a body by the manager of the Buckhead Theatre to see the Warner picture *Is Everybody Happy.* These parties demonstrating the feeling of goodwill on the part of exhib-

itors toward the Atlanta Committee have resulted in a statement from the Committee of appreciation for the friendly spirit and calling attention to the fact that they wish to maintain at all times, a personal contact congenial and harmonious with local theatre managers in a spirit of genuine cooperation striving to promote a closer understanding of the problems of producers and exhibitors.

The picture *Wild Company* was the occasion for another attendance party of the Committee. High recommendation locally was given to this picture which had been marked as a starred selected picture by the National Board of Review, the dramatic critic of the Atlanta Constitution having said of it "The story could have made a great sermon, instead it has made a great picture." Mrs. Irving Thomas, chairman of the Attendance Party Committee is keeping a record of the number coming to these special parties. This is in line with the object of the Committee recently stated which is to select and encourage the best in pictures, and to develop public sentiment in support of the best. The Committee feels that the public will always be the final arbiter as to what type of pictures are shown and in their support behind the worth while pictures lies the answer to the problems of improvement.

THE Macon (Ga.) Better Films Committee showed its appreciation of the excellent work of its officers by voting to retain the entire slate for the coming year at its annual election meeting. Mrs. Piercy Chestney was installed as president again, thus beginning her eighth successful term of office.

Others selected to serve with Mrs. Chestney were Mrs. Walter Grace, vice-president; Mrs. Sidney Wiley, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Robert Nussbaum, recording secretary; and Mrs. A. F. McGhee, treasurer.

The annual report of the matinee chairman brought out the fact that the junior matinees during the past year have been enjoyed by nearly 20,000 children. They have been historical films, pictures on important birthdays, on national celebrations and other educational as well as entertainment pictures. The largest single attendance for the year was April 5th, when 1,000 children were in attendance.

The month of June while reported particularly dull in some fields of motion picture activity, was an unusually busy one for the Macon Committee. About 2,370 children, according to the records, have been present at the matinees during the past month. Flag Day and Father's Day were celebrated. Every father who accompanied his son to the Saturday morning matinee of June 14, was presented with a tie. Both Confederate and Federal veterans were also invited to the matinees.

Varying the usual custom of having a feature picture as the high light of the program for the Saturday morning matinee, a program of short subjects was arranged for a July matinee. The following attractions were shown: *Paramount News; Roman Punch,* a Terrytoon animated cartoon comedy; *Audio Review;* a comedy, *The Big Jewel Case* and the sixth chapter of the *Haunted Island.* The souvenirs were packages of double bubble gum and double bubble gliders, which really fly.

A recent matinee was given under the auspices of the Whittle school for the purpose of raising funds for the vacation of the students of the Fresh Air School of that city. Whittle provided the prologue for the morning and the ushers and students of the school had the tickets for sale at 10 cents each.

The president of the Committee, who is continually in demand in her state, was asked to speak on the motion picture at the P.-T. A. Institute held at the University at Athens on July 23rd to 25th.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

FRANCIS C. BARRETT
HELEN CAHILL

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience. *Pictures recommended for the family audience* (12 *years up*).

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience* (18 *years up*).

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays."*

* Abraham Lincoln

Featuring .....*Walter Huston*
Directed by.....*D. W. Griffith*

Story by Stephen Vincent Benet

A REMARKABLY beautiful picture portrayal of the life of Abraham Lincoln made so through sympathetic and penetrating understanding of the part by director and actor. This picture is deserving of the most whole hearted support combining as it does a theme of wide appeal with high entertainment values in the presentation.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(United Artists—10 reels)

Ave Maria

Featuring .....*Maria Grazrata*

AN Italian production telling the story of a girl who is kidnapped by a dissolute count's son. Her brother and the populace besiege the castle where she is held prisoner. Especially interesting to Italian audiences.

For the mature audience.

(Grillo Pictures—6 reels)

* Call of the Flesh

Featuring .....*Ramon Novarro*
Directed by.....*Charles Brabin*

Screen story by Dorothy Farnum

THIS picture was at first and more appropriately titled "The Singer of Seville." It tells a romantic story of a young nun who runs away from a convent to see the world but who is sent back by a singer with whom she falls in love although he returns her love. Novarro sings several pleasing numbers.

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—11 reels)

Doughboy

Featuring .....*Buster Keaton*
Directed by.....*Edward Sedgwick*

Screen story by Al Boasberg and Sidney Lazarus

IN his second sound film the comedian, Buster Keaton, goes through a good comic routine as an unwilling doughboy who gets himself enlisted by mistake and becomes a hero by accident.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Escape

Featuring .....*Sir Gerald du Maurier*
Directed by.....*Basil Deal*
Play by John Galsworthy

AN outstanding interpretation of the hero of Galsworthy's very interesting play portraying a prisoner's escape and the long hunt in which he is re-captured.

For the mature audience.

(RKO—8 reels)

Follow Thru

Featuring ..... *Charles Rogers*, *Nancy Carroll*
Directed by ..... *Lawrence Schwab*, *Lloyd Corrigan*
Musical comedy by DeSylva, Brown and Henderson

AN entertaining musical comedy excellently photographed in technicolor. Golf is the background for the story with a romance interwoven.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—10 reels)

* Grumpy

Featuring .....*Cyril Maude*
Directed by.....*George Cukor*
Play by Horace Hodges and T. Wigney Percyval

"GRUMPY" a testy old retired criminal lawyer solves the mystery of a stolen diamond which envolves the young man engaged to his niece. A delightful character study on the part of Cyril Maude, the well-known English actor, duplicating his stage success.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

* Hell's Angels

Featuring ..... *Ben Lyon*, *James Hall*
Directed by.....*Howard Hughes*
Screen story by Marshal Neilan and J. M. March

AN outstanding war picture. Two brothers, one strong, the other weak, enter the service as aviators. They are captured after having destroyed a German munition camp. A spectacular zeppelin raid over London and exciting aerial combats cause this long-heralded picture to live up to expectations.

For the family audience.

(United Artists—13 reels)

The Last of the Duanes

Featuring .....*George O'Brien*
Directed by.....*Alfred Werker*
Novel by Zane Grey

A WESTERN in which the hero avenges the death of his father and becomes an outlaw. He squares himself with the law however, by killing a notorious bandit from whom he has rescued the heroine. Excellent riding and fine scenery.

For the family audience.

(Fox—6 reels)

* Monte Carlo

Featuring ..... *Jeannette McDonald*, *Jack Buchanan*
Directed by.....*Ernst Lubitsch*
Story "The Blue Coast" by Hans Mueller

A CHARMING and pictorially beautiful operetta made distinctive through the direction of Mr. Lubitsch. A countess runs away to Monte Carlo to escape a royal marriage. She tries her luck at the roulette wheel and loses but wins the love of a young count who enters her service as a hair dresser. She snubs him until he reveals his identity.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—10 reels)

The Office Wife

Featuring ..... { *Dorothy Mackaill* / *Lewis Stone*
Directed by.....*Lloyd Bacon*

Novel by Faith Baldwin

STORY of the inevitable personal relations that grew up between an employer and his secretary. The theme is very well handled and the dialogue good affording pleasing light entertainment.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—6 reels)

*Old English

Featuring .....*George Arliss*
Directed by.....*Alfred Green*

Play by John Galsworthy

A CHARMING character story of an old English merchant who has been somewhat of a gay dog and high liver in his day. When his sins overtake him, he dies game. An outstanding piece of acting is contributed by Mr. Arliss supported by a good cast. Able direction also marks this production.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—9 reels)

Reno

Featuring .....*Ruth Roland*
Directed by.....*George J. Crone*

Novel by Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr.

A WOMAN fights her husband's schemes to get a divorce from her and succeeds in saving her good name and retaining the custody of her child. Well portrayed characterization by Ruth Roland.

For the mature audience.

(Sono-Art-World Wide—8 reels)

*Romance

Directed by.....*Clarence Brown*
Featuring .....*Greta Garbo*

Play by Edward Sheldon

A FASCINATING opera star of fifty years ago is a role well fitted to the charming Garbo and she plays it to a perfection which makes the Sheldon play relive. The story concerns a beautiful Italian singer who comes to America and is much sought after but who loves only a young rector realizing however how far apart they are in life.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

Soup to Nuts

Featuring .....*Ted Healy*
Directed by.....*Ben Stoloff*

Screen story by Rube Goldberg

A HILARIOUS jumble of nonsense about a crazy inventor and a lackadaisical fire company ending up in a comic fire.

For the family audience.

(Fox—7 reels)

Viennese Nights

Featuring .....*Vivienne Segal*
Directed by.....*Alan Crossland*

Operetta by Oscar Hammerstein, Jr. and S. Romberg

AN OPERETTA. The story of the love of a poor musician and a girl whose father demands that she marry a rich man.

For the family audience.

(Warner—9 reels)

BOOK WEEK

November 16th - 22nd, 1930

Offers Opportunity
for
Junior Matinee Showings
of
SPECIAL BOOK-FILMS

SHORT SUBJECTS

An Average Husband

Comedy in which a wife decides her stoutish clowning husband is the best after all.

For the mature audience.

(Educational—2 reels)

Baby Frolics

(Gus Edwards' Juvenile Troupe)

Musical comedy enacted by a group of youngsters very pleasing and effective.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

The Big Review

A stage review with songs, dancing and solo performances by a bright and entertaining group of children.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(World Art—2 reels)

Cold Feet

(Oswald Cartoon)

Activity in the snow capped mountains.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Universal—1 reel)

Dude Ranching

(Sportlight Series)

The delights of spending a vacation on a ranch high up in the mountains.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

The Ebony Shrine

A travelogue of Guatemala showing interesting views of temple ruins, churches and the native market.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Fashion's Mirror

(Vitaphone No. 1045)

A pleasing fashion show with songs and music.

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Flying Fists

Cartoon of a comic prize fight between a frog and a turtle.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

A Flying Trip

(Lyman Howe's Hodge Podge Series)

Combination cartoon and scenic of European countries.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Educational—1 reel)

The Freshman's Goat

Lively comedy in which the Sophomores and Freshmen contest for the class mascot.

For the family audience.

(Educational—2 reels)

Frozen Frolics

A musical frolic at the North Pole with bears and penguins and walruses.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Hen Pecked

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald and his gang are sucked up by a vacuum cleaner.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Universal—1 reel)

The Hidden Ball

(Knute Rockne Football Series)

The famous coach uses the Notre Dame team to illustrate some football plays.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Horse Sense

Clever doings of a beautiful trained horse called "Sporting Life."

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Kiddy Review
(Gus Edwards' Juvenile Troupe)

Musical comedy by a group of expert youngsters.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

The Last Yard
(Knute Rockne Football Series)

Football formations and maneuvers.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Laundry Blues
(Aesop Fables Cartoon)

Fun in a Chinese laundry.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Let 'Er Buck
(Sportlight Series)

A spirited rodeo meeting.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

The Little Covered Wagon

A clever group of chimpanzees give an excellent version of a Western thriller.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Tiffany—2 reels)

Old Seidelberg
(Vitaphone No. 4169)

Excellent singing with a German beer garden background.

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Parlez Vous

Comedy of soldier life in France.

For the family audience.

(Universal—2 reels)

Pathe Audio Review Nos. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel each)

Romance of the Radio

An industrial picture depicting the entire process of manufacturing Majestic radio sets, shown with accompanying explanations in an interesting way.

For the family audience.

(Craft Films—7 reels)

Satan's Fury

A travelogue picture of New Zealand's volcanic formations and geysers.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

School's Out
(Our Gang Comedy)

The children play all kinds of pranks on a young man whom they suspect of wanting to marry their favorite teacher.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Self Defense
(Sportlight Series)

The manly art of self defense as practiced by amateur boxers in camps and in the navy.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Ski-Hi Frolics
(Sportlight Series)

A gay party of young people ascending Pike's Peak by mule, tram and foot.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Snappy Salesman
(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald runs a musical instrument shop and drums up trade despite the opposition of neighbors.

For the family audience. Junior Matinee.

(Universal—1 reel)

Twixt Love and Duty
(Vitaphone No. 4168)

A corking burlesque of a Western.

Family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

offers through its

AFFILIATED BETTER FILMS COMMITTEES

An Opportunity to Promote Better Motion Picture Programs in Your Home Theatre

The Better Films Committee or Motion Picture Study Club plan has been found by many communities to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council as an aid in carrying out these purposes furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Motion Picture Study Club Plan	free
The Work of the National Board of Review	free
Selected Pictures Catalogue (annual)	25c
Selected Book-Films (annual)	10c
National Board of Review Magazine	a year $2.00
Sample Copy of the Magazine	free
Weekly Guide to Selected Pictures	a year $2.50

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City .....

State .....

NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. V, No. 8 October, 1930

Lincoln with his Generals from Griffith's "Abraham Lincoln" (see page 8)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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20 cents a copy $2.00 a year

NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

Tbe National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do witb community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide tbe motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to whicb policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule duriug each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membersbip list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showiugs of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay tbe foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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You're in the Army Now
Zampa

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We Agree

AN editorial in the current issue of the Exhibitor's Herald World causes us to offer a hearty aye, aye. Under the title "Feminine Interest" appeared the following revealing comment:

"A recent inquiry relative to the feminine interest in such pictures as *The Dawn Patrol, All Quiet on the Western Front, Journey's End* and *The Big House* has brought out some very interesting information.

"Three of these subjects which are classed as war pictures and the fourth which is a crook story are all entertainments of a type against which there is commonly levelled the charge of limited interest on the part of women. The record, however, is that all of these subjects are attracting heavy women patronage.

"A subject which is not a particularly strong one may be redeemed if it has some especial appeal to women. But if the subject in question is an outstanding entertainment, as each of these subjects is, then whether or not it contains the accepted elements of woman-appeal is a matter of very little importance. The general merit of the subject is the test that tells the story.

"The picture business will be taking another long step toward maturity when it drops forever all the arbitrary rules for prejudging what a picture must, supposedly, contain in order to be successful. A few years ago anyone proposing a picture without a single feminine character would have been considered insane. Yet two of these outstanding successes mentioned above contain no feminine characters. *Men Without Women,* one of the finest pictures of last season, likewise had no feminine characters.

"Women of course, incline toward the romantic story, but when a picture like *The Big House* comes along it matters not whether it is a crook play; its strength of theme, character portrayal and masterful treatment make it a real attraction for the public, irrespective of sex.

"The picture made to any specific formula has, increasingly, less chance of success. On the other hand, the 'big picture,' regardless of its component elements is—very obviously—what the public, and the whole public wants."

Since this deduction is based upon that reliable barometer, the Box-Office, it cannot be gainsaid and therefore may be counted upon to have a part in helping to get those "bigger" pictures. That is, those made with a breadth of appeal and from a width of subject not limited to what it is mistakenly supposed the women want. Let us have a change in style in pictures. Has not romance as a plot perhaps been fashioned too oft?

The Place and Value of Motion Pictures In Educational Work

By William H. Dudley

Better Films Committees in those communities where teaching films are not used by the schools can find a worthy extension of their activity in arousing interest and support for this very important phase of better films work. Dr. Dudley has long been connected with the field of visual instruction for many years as Director of Visual Education at the University of Wisconsin. From his experience he gives in the following paper some exceedingly valuable thoughts and suggestions on this subject. Dr. Dudley is at present Regional Distributor at Chicago, of the Yale Chronicles of America Photoplays.—Editor's Note.

MOTION PICTURES in the educational field constitute but one phase of what is now commonly termed visual education, or visual instruction. The term visual instruction is a comparatively new one, having come into use within the past thirty years. Even now its technical meaning is not universally understood. Not long ago a well-known physician appeared before a legislative committee to oppose the establishment of a visual instruction department in one of our state universities, giving as a ground for his opposition the fact, as he viewed it, that such a department would rob the occulists of the community where the university was located, of much of their practice.

In a broad sense, the term as now used means instruction through the eye. But from his earliest advent upon the earth man has gained more knowledge through the sense of sight than through any other of his five senses. The narrower and more technical, hence more modern meaning of visual instruction therefore is that of the use of pictures of all kinds in the teaching process; and its rapid development within the last thirty years finds its explanation in the speed with which optical instruments and photographic processes have been developed and perfected. Half tones in books and periodicals are the most abundant forms of visual education today—more specialized forms are the stereograph or stereoscopic views, the lantern slide and the motion picture.

Any of us who can look back thirty-five or forty years can recall the pile of stereoscopic views and the stereoscope that was invariably to be found on the what-not in every parlor. No caller was permitted to enter the house without going through those pictures and admiring them, and as a rule they were far from admirable, for the pictures were crude and the lenses of the stereoscope were inferior. Yet today stereographs of the highest quality photographically and artistically constitute part of the equipment of a majority of the schools of the country. What was originally intended as a means of entertainment now has a place in the serious work of the schoolroom. Likewise the stereopticon or lantern slides and projector have been evolved from the old magic lantern of forty years ago. Some of us can recall the peripatetic magic-lantern man with his ill-smelling oil lamp and blurry lens and comic caricatures of slides; but the youngsters of that day were entertained beyond measure. Today the stereopticon has very little value as an entertainment device, but it has become increasingly valuable and important in the hands of teachers, and with all grades of pupils from the kindergarten to the university.

Then dawned the day of the motion picture. Contrary to the stereograph and the lantern slide, the motion picture started as an educational contrivance. I saw the first motion pictures shown at the Chicago World's fair—and they were distinctly educational in character. And it was assumed that the great contribution of the motion picture to mankind would be in the field of

education. Indeed it was about that time that Thomas Edison made the startling prediction that teachers and text books were both doomed to be discarded, and that all teaching would be done with motion pictures.

So soon, however, were the entertainment possibilities of the motion picture perceived and hence its great money-making powers recognized that it was seized upon almost over night; and the teaching films were lost sight of in the incredibly rapid development of the motion picture show. And this entertainment conception of the cinema has carried over from the theatre to the school. It may safely be said that the greatest handicap visual education has been carrying for years, so far as the proper use of motion pictures in schools is concerned, is the handicap of "Showmanship." Just why and how this has come about is a rather long story. In a word, it has been due chiefly to a lack of funds in the school budget for financing the installation of rather expensive projectors and necessary accessories and for paying rental on films thus resulting in the giving of entertainments—"school shows"—to raise necessary funds for such purposes. Quite generally, too, a professional or theatre type machine has been installed in the auditorium of a school, the chief, if not sole, use of such machine being the presenting of films "of general interest" to the assembly. Such an arrangement automatically hinders any serious attempt to bring suitable teaching reels into the classroom.

During the past twelve months the writer has had an unusual opportunity to study the motion picture machine as a school apparatus. In that time a total of approximately two hundred and twenty-five conferences were held in seventeen states of the union, with a total attendance of upwards of three thousand city superintendents, high school principals and special teachers of history present at the conferences. Although, of course, there were exceptions, nevertheless the quite uniform report of all these people was to the effect that the motion picture has been an auditorium project, and that the results have been disappointing. The real place and function of the motion picture film in education therefore, it should be repeated, has not been correctly appreciated, obvious as its values would seem to be to the initiated. Motion pictures are not only useful but may safely be regarded as a necessity where the problem to be solved by a class is a problem of motion, essential action—where a life process is to be demonstrated, where life activities of individuals or communities or peoples are involved—and especially where such knowledge cannot be gained by any other means or device within the reach of the teacher. And there are thousands of such problems that can be solved in no other way—the intimate processes that go on in a gas engine, the peristaltic action of the digestive tract, the intricacies of blood circulation, the metabolic changes that take place in the tissues, the way an individual lives and moves and has its being; success in life from the standpoint of a starfish—of a bird—of a hottentot, the vocations of the people of Borneo, how the Eskimo of the frozen north live and love and treat one another, how the peoples and races of by-gone ages solved the problems of existence peculiar to their times and their environments—their industries, their wars, their worships, their courtships, their homelife—all these activities and life expressions can be re-lived, can be vitalized only by means of motion pictures, lacking which the student must continue to be content with the east wind of authority. There, then, is the justification, indeed the imperative demand for motion pictures in the classroom. But the films must measure up to the standards just pointed out; they must present essential action; they must depict life processes and the life of the human race, both of the present day and of the centuries that have gone before, truthfully, sincerely and tersely, each reel to drive home an important lesson convincingly, and as nothing else can do.

It is most gratifying to find that educa-

tional leaders are becoming fully aroused to an appreciation of the mistakes of the past and of the real place of motion pictures as an invaluable contribution to better teaching. Instead of the unwieldly, cumbersome showpiece in the auditorium, up-to-date portable projectors are being installed everywhere—often in a well-planned visual instruction "laboratory." It is being recognized that only non-inflammable films should ever be brought into a school building, and that the films employed should be built directly into the daily lesson instead of serving merely as an auditorium show, or as a general review of an entire course. More gratifying still is the fact that producers of educational films today, profiting by mistakes that have been made in the past, are organizing motion pictures that fulfill most acceptably the standards set forth above—and not now and then a single reel, isolated and unrelated, but series of reels carefully correlated with definitely established courses of study.

It is no longer possible to say, as has been said so often in the past; "If we could be sure of proper teaching films our schools would make proper provision for their use." The situation is now reversed; films of the highest quality, and in ever increasing abundance, are now available. Producers have courageously risked hundreds of thousands of dollars in giving us films that meet the real needs of the schools of our land. The important question now is whether school authorities will respond to the demands of the hour by putting funds for visual education in the annual budget in sufficient amount to support and expand the work so admirably conceived and under way. The day of the school show and other makeshift devices for financing the serious educational work of our schools is past. Films and projectors should be provided in the same way books and laboratory apparatus are provided. So "put money in thy purse." Investigate thoroughly and discriminately and support all worthy undertakings thus speeding the day of a better knowledge of and a more thorough training in the technique of this important phase of education.

MISS MARILLA FREEMAN, Secretary of the Motion Picture Committee of the American Library Association and Librarian of the Main Library of the Cleveland Public Library, has sent us the following list in book-mark form of related reading material for the film *Moby Dick*. This is of particular "Book Week" interest.

MOBY DICK

"There she blows—there she blows! A hump like a snow-hill! It's Moby Dick!"
—MELVILLE, *"Moby Dick"*

A reading list suggested by
THE
CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Romances of Whaling

"He gave me a water spout, A side like a harbor wall.
—BENET, *"The Whale"*

MELVILLE
Moby Dick; or the White Whale.
BULLEN
Cruise of the Cachelot.
CONNOLLY
Out of Gloucester.
HOPKINS
She blows! and sparm at that!
MORLEY
East—South—East.

There She Blows!

"The wild and distant seas where he rolled his island bulk." Moby Dick.

ANDREWS
Whale hunting with gun and camera.
ASHLEY
The Yankee Whaler.
CHATTERTON
Whalers and Whaling.
COOK
Pursuing the Whale
LINDSAY
Voyage to the Arctic on the Whaler Aurora.
HAWES
Whaling
NORDHOFF
Whaling and Fishing.
TILTON
"Cap'n George Fred" himself.
VERRILL
The Real Story of the Whale.

Plays of Sea Life

CLEMENTS
Sea Plays.
O'NEILL
The Moon of the Caribbees, and six other sea plays.

Booking for Book Week

WITH BOOK WEEK of 1930 being the twelfth annual observance, there is no question that this is now a permanent institution and one offering each year more angles of significant tie-ups for Better Films Committees. The dates are November 16th to 22nd, so it is now time to plan with exhibitors for special book-film showings for this week. Particularly for the week-end family program during Book Week should a book-film be featured. There are available many excellent films adapted from books. The production of sound films has made the number of adaptations from novels and published plays greater than ever, as material from this source is better fitted for the "talkies" than for the "silents" of other days. The National Board of Review has compiled its annual list of Selected Book-Films including over 120 titles.

That the interest of organizations in putting over successful community Book Week programs is appreciated by the National Association of Book Publishers, sponsors of Book Week, is shown in one of their 1930 announcements which says in speaking of the number of articles which are to appear in national magazines and newspapers regarding Book Week that "undoubtedly this has resulted partly from the demonstrations and programs which have been held in every state year after year since 1919." Book Week articles will appear in many general magazines, in numerous specialized publications as Women's, Children's, Religious and Educational Magazines. The American Boy, The American Girl and Boy's Life are announcing special prize contests. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers in co-operation with the National Association of Book Publishers is offering prizes for the best accounts of Book Week programs conducted under the auspices of a Parent-Teacher Association or Council.

Assuredly, therefore, with the idea so widely exploited and with so many of the organizations of the community interested, Better Films Committees will find that their plans for film tie-ups will meet with hearty response. Publicity Chairman, Junior Matinee Chairman, Library Co-operation Chairman, Visual Instruction Chairman, and other departments can utilize this week to exceptional advantage in their departments.

From the list of Selected Book-Films of the National Board, appropriate programs can be arranged with the theatre exhibitors and the schools for both entertainment and educational showings. Many valuable aids such as The Manual of Suggested Projects for Book Week and High School Projects for Book Week are available from the National Association of Book Publishers, 347 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

If pictures are made a part of the extensive community program for Book Week, doubtless new contacts of interest will be aroused which will continue throughout the year in Better Films Committee work.

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

COMMITTEE

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WALTER W. PETTIT
M. R. WERNER

A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

WILTON A. BARRETT

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

Outward Bound

Directed by.....*Robert Milton*
Photographed by.....*Hal Mohr*
Play by Sutton Vane

The Players

Leslie Howard	*Alec B. Francis*
Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.	*Montagu Love*
Beryl Mercer	*Lyonel Watts*
Dudley Digges	*Alison Skipworth*

Helen Chandler

Produced and distributed by Warner Bros.

OUTWARD BOUND is in every way a remarkable picture. It deals with an unusual and, for the screen, a daring theme, it is superbly acted and the direction is of the highest quality.

Best of all, perhaps, is the fact that the impressive play by Mr. Sutton Vane on which the picture is based has not been tampered with to make a movie holiday. The action has not been changed except in so far as the medium of screen presentation had to be taken into account. The dialogue has also been adhered to as faithfully as possible. There has been no smart rewriting and no attempt to put in gags.

Thus the picture retains all the solemnity, the aura of other-worldliness, and the human appeal which made the stage presentation so impressive.

And in some ways it is even astonishing that this story was chosen for the screen at all. By all the laws of safe and sane choosing for popular appeal the play should have been rejected for picture material on the basis of its theme. Death treated seriously and inexorably is not supposed to be a subject that will "pack 'em in." The screen has been accustomed to treat death as a cheap fiction and to stage a return to life at a moment's notice. Shoot a hero or a heroine in the average film and rest as-

Leslie Howard in "Outward Bound"

sured that they will rebound from the beyond like rubber balls to take a bow in the last reel.

Here we see a varied company of men and women all assembled on board a ship which is "outward bound" for the beyond. This surprising news is imparted to them by a sort of heavenly skipper of the strange craft as the boat is apparently pulling out of a real harbor with the usual to-do that accompanies a sailing.

The passengers take the news differently, according to the stature and the depth of their souls. An eerie atmosphere takes possession of the goings on in the boat, a curious mixture of realism and allegory. The lives and characters of the passengers become clear to us, their pettiness and mistakes and, above all, their essential helplessness later under the eye of the "examiner" who comes on board.

Among them there moves a couple, a young man and a girl, the half-ways, held between life and death, neither quite in the one nor in the other. They have sought death but have not quite attained it. In their shadowy elusiveness as compared to the others we see a curious reversal of values: among the dead you have to be really dead to be tangible, it is life that is unreal.

Around these two and the pathos and the poetry of their love what there is of plot revolves. The solution of their predicament and their transfiguration are things that must not be given away to readers who have not yet seen the picture.

In congratulating Warner Brothers on making this film and in considering it a piece of screen pioneering it seems to us also that the picture could hardly have been made except in the combination of talking and silent picture. As a straight silent picture it would have fallen flat or could probably not have been made except by large deviation from the original play. Here we find the voice enhancing, in beautiful and appropriate speech, the subtle intentions of the author, while the shadows on the screen enhance the essential reality of these strange people who are dead and yet move with the eloquence of the living in a state once removed from actuality, as shadows should. Here the screen has distinctly added something to the stage.

The whole company rises to the spirit and the implications of the picture. Several of them were members of the original play when it was on the boards in New York. They must have viewed themselves in their parts with an uncanny feeling of familiarity mingled with a new strangeness. For they were more nearly inhabitants of the land of shadows than they had been in the play.

Mr. Robert Milton achieved some of his best work as a director in guiding the fortunes of *Outward Bound*. With so many distinguished stage successes to his credit it is only natural to assume that he is also responsible for jealously preserving the original values of this fine play in his task of presenting it to the larger motion picture public.

Abraham Lincoln

Directed by.....D. W. Griffith
Photographed by.....Karl Struss
Story by Stephen Vincent Benet

The Cast

Abraham Lincoln.....Walter Huston
Nancy Hanks Lincoln.....Helen Freeman
Tom Lincoln.....W. L. Thorne
Ann Rutledge.....Una Merkel
Mary Todd.....Kay Hammond
Stephen A. Douglas.....E. Alyn Warren

Produced and distributed by
United Artists

THE screen has celebrated some of its greatest triumphs in the depiction of stories based upon an historical background. We need to call to mind only pictures like *Dubarry, Deception, Peter the Great* and others in which personalities famous in history have figured as protagonists. The success in this field has been due to the fact that the screen was dealing with realities and deeds which could not be materially

altered. The director, chastened by the historical actualities with which he had to deal, could not afford to indulge in the sentimentalities and romantic exaggerations which so often spoil pictures for the intelligent spectator.

In making *Abraham Lincoln* Mr. Griffith, a director whose excellencies have often been marred by his extravagances, was fortunately aware of the restrictions which his subject imposed upon him. He has gone back to the true and historical sources of the life of Lincoln, aided greatly by the vivid and gripping interpretation of Stephen Vincent Benet.

The early incidences of Lincoln's life and upbringing are truthfully portrayed and his pathetic romance with Ann Rutledge is sympathetically depicted. The debate with Douglas is emphasized with due regard to its historical importance and to the part it played in making Lincoln a presidential candidate. The major issues which this debate involved, the freeing of the slaves and the question of the inviolability of the Union, are skillfully stressed by Lincoln's well-pointed refutations of Douglas' arguments. The technical handling of this sequence is particularly noteworthy.

In a picture of this nature where the historical facts have been so closely observed and therefore follow along the lines of the spectator's common knowledge it is the interpretation of the major roles rather than the story upon which the critic is most likely to focus his attention. Mr. Walter Huston puts much more into his part than a mere physical imitation of the Great Emancipator's appearance. He acts with a combination of the humility and the grandeur which we have come to associate with the name of Abraham Lincoln and in spite of the fact that he is called upon to do many of the familiar acts which are a part of the Lincoln tradition his performance is always individualized.

It is only fair to say that the picture as a whole was made with a judicious regard for the susceptibilities of Southern audiences. General Lee is, of course, nobly portrayed by Mr. Hobart Bosworth and the stirring episode of Sheridan's ride is dramatically set forth. But none of the real horrors and deprivations of the war, the gradual wearing down of the South and its economic ruination are dwelt upon at all. Sherman's march to the sea is significantly omitted. As a matter of fact, the entire war is treated as a side light, it is the tragic background inevitable in a picturization of the President who remained unmoved in his determination to preserve the Union at all costs. This is in strange contrast to the present day realism which characterizes the depiction of the world war.

The picture ends with the assassination of Lincoln and his glorification in the memory of the world through his martyrdom. A view of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington brings this picture to a fitting close.

Old English

Directed by.....Alfred E. Green
Photographed by.....James Vantrees

Play by John Galsworthy

The Cast

Sylvanus Heythorp.....George Arliss
Mrs. Larne.....Doris Lloyd
Phyllis Larne.....Betty Lawford
Jock Larne.....Leon Janney
Joe Phillin.....Ivan Simpson
Adela Heythorp.....Ethel Griffies

Produced and distributed by Warner Bros.

GEORGE ARLISS, always a consummate character actor, reaches a peak in his performance in *Old English.* This racy play, fashioned by John Galsworthy in one of those rare moments when this usually so thesis-ridden dramatist was content to create characters that live rather than bookish illustrations for one of his pet themes for social reform, provides Mr. Arliss with an incomparable opportunity to display the resources of a master craftsman of the stage.

Not that Mr. Arliss has not already given

George Arliss dines in "Old English"

us abundant proofs of his talent. In *Disraeli* his work on the screen had already reached an enviable culmination which followed soon after his triumph in *The Green Goddess*. But in *Disraeli* he had the advantage of the pomp and circumstance of courts and their etiquette and the action of the drama revolved around the fate of empires. These are no mean advantages for the enhancement of a role in the hands of a skillful actor.

In *Old English* Mr. Arliss was faced with the problem of straight characterization of a Liverpool merchant of the old school, a figure drawn for us by Mr. Galsworthy with a forthrightness to which American audiences are not altogether accustomed. For we are used to having our captains of industry represented to us as lily white mountains of industry and honesty.

Consider for a moment, the career of Sylvanus Heythorp, Esq., this egregious high liver who boasts of a pair of illegitimate grandchildren, who cheats his stockholders and who commits suicide by drinking himself to death when he is about to be exposed. Can the American movie public, trained to accept the pap of hollow righteousness in its picture fare, be expected to welcome such a complete reversal of standards which makes a villain over into the hero of the picture and dares to say that the full picture of a man may include his vices?

Warner Brothers are to be congratulated for their shrewd courage in presenting this departure from the conventional pattern. *Old English* may not be a flapper picture at first sight but even the flapper of today has a weakness for a wicked grandfather and the ladies of yesteryear who will flock to see the picture will recall their Dickens and will dote upon Sylvanus who could appreciate a pretty girl, a thoroughbred horse and a bottle of musty port so wholeheartedly.

Sylvanus Heythorp has reached the seventy years of indiscretion of a buccaneering career of hard living and hard bar-

(*Continued on page* 23)

BETTER FILMS FORUM

EDITOR: BETTINA GUNCZY

Department of the Better Films National Council

How We Interest the Public

By MRS. SCOTT STAPLES

This paper which was delivered at the Annual Tea Conference of the Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee contained so much which was of help to those gathered at the Conference that we were happy when Mrs. Staples responded to our request to let us have it to pass on to others through our Magazine.—EDITOR'S NOTE.

TO become famous it is necessary to have publicity, and publicity with a capital "P". While the Rutherford Better Films Committee has not sought fame, as such, it has sought avenues of publicity that its work might become known and that interest in it might be aroused.

These are three very definite ways in which we put our work before the public.

1. The Weekly Photoplay Guide
2. "Do You Know?" Column
3. Exceptional and Educational Showings

The first two of these take the form of newspaper publicity. Editing the Weekly Photoplay Guide was about the first task of the infant Rutherford Better Films Committee. To edit this guide it is necessary to obtain advance bookings from the theatre exhibitor. These are then checked with the findings of the National Board of Review as given in its monthly magazine. The guide giving a brief resume of each coming attraction listed as selected, appears weekly in a fixed place in our local paper under the heading "Weekly Photoplay Guide" and is to the discriminating reader a sign post to the fine picture programs. The motto of the National Board, "Selection—Not Censorship" is rigidly applied to this guide, since the non-selected coming attractions are ignored and only the selected pictures written up.

"Do You Know?" heads a column of all sorts of interesting and out of the ordinary doings which take place anywhere in the Movie World. There may be half a dozen brief subjects touched upon in the column, but each separate one begins "Do You Know?" such and such about so and so. Sometimes the entire "Do You Know?" is this or that about the local committee but more often it is of things outside. This column appears from time to time as subjects warrant, but whenever it does appear it is sure to be worth while and of much interest.

The Exceptional and Educational picture showings deal with films themselves and our methods of presenting these special films to their particular audiences. For there are two types of movie-minded audiences, the one interested in whatever is flashed on the screen—the movie "fan"—which the theatre takes care of, and the other only slightly interested in motion pictures and for which the finest must be sought out and presented.

We have a mailing list of persons who have signified a wish to be notified whenever an exceptional photoplay is among the coming attractions at the theatre, by exceptional photoplay I mean the motion picture of unusual artistic merit and generally of only limited audience appeal. To this list we mail penny post-cards bear-

ing the title of the coming exceptional photoplay, its date and reason why the National Board has classified it as exceptional.

From time to time we are able to procure for presentation, through the courtesy of the National Board of Review, an eminently worth while, exceptional picture, but one unlikely ever to be exhibited except perhaps in a Little Photoplay Theatre and so debarred for the most part from the really quite large audience in Rutherford, interested in the finest films.

We present these programs in our High School auditorium to an invited audience. In the past we have shown such pictures as *Shattered, Tillers of the Soil, Rain* and others of similar high character and lasting impression. One year we exhibited at our local theatre at regular box office prices such a distinctive program. Our presentation consisted of what was among the finest of both the professional and amateur cinematic world, including *Potemkin,* that marvelous mass-movement Russian film, and the prize-winning amateur film *And How.* To complete the program a legitimate stage presentation by the Rutherford Little Theatre Guild was given. Response in interest was so generous and emphatic that, can similar exceptional programs be assembled, "Community Night," as it was called, will be repeated.

Prior to this past winter the photoplays presented at our invitation showings have always been of purely entertainment type. This year, however, we obtained, through the courtesy of the National Board of Review for presentation in February, *Mechanics of the Brain,* a psychological and scientific film. To this showing we invited a limited and exclusive audience made up of doctors, nurses, social workers and those of the general public truly interested in this type of picture. Our speaker was Dr. J. F. Montague, a Bellevue Hospital surgeon, a member of the National Board of Review, whose subject was the "Relation Between the Motion Picture and Surgery." He brought with him for presentation a film of an actual surgical operation.

We asked those arriving for a voluntary silver offering at the door since there were some few expenses incurred. We were delighted with the response prior to the showing of the film. But what amazed and gratified us, and was at the same time significant of the reaction of the audience to this specialized program, was the fact that a full one-third of our receipts was received after the show as the audience passed out of the auditorium. Dearth of the truly exceptional pictures since the advent of the "talkies" has been responsible for our seeming lack of activity with this type of unusual picture.

Contrary to general belief, we have found that the educational picture holds the interest of people of all ages and gives the lie to that old statement that education can be administered only if sugar coated. We have doled out education in devious ways, through the motion picture for the past four years and the victims, or patients, or what you choose, have liked it as they have come back for more.

For two years at our Saturday Afternoon Junior Matinees for the benefit of the children, we introduced into the program of Family Week-End pictures short educational pictures of industrial subjects, scenics, travelogues and such, and the reaction of the junior audience was markedly in their favor. And in the present monthly Saturday Morning Matinees, similar pictures are shown and like reactions noted.

For adult groups such as clubs or organizations, we have secured programs of educational subjects which have been sponsored by them. For instance, the Delphians presented that beautiful picture on physical culture going back to the Greek and Roman gymnasium and up to our present aesthetic dances and sports, *The Way to Strength and Beauty.*

From time to time too we have secured

for school groups programs of educationals which they have presented in their school auditorium and the proceeds from which were used for some school project. Lists, too, of available educational pictures, many of them free for the asking are kept up-to-date, and programs from them are obtained by our Visual Instruction Committee for groups or organizations desiring the service.

In connection with this Educational or Visual Instruction work a Travel Bureau was started. This Bureau has conducted, by special bus, trips to New York City or vicinity to various places of interest. Teachers or parents have acted as chaperones to the children attending. One trip was made to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City where after a survey of the museum, an education in itself, the group was taken to the auditorium where, while tired feet rested, a motion picture arranged for in advance. by our Visual Instruction Committee, *Nanook of the North,* delighted and enlightened the minds of the children. The bus ride home through New York across the river and through Jersey to Rutherford completed a highly enjoyable and educational day.

Publicity and again publicity with a capital "P" is given to all these educational and exceptional endeavors, both before and after they take place, in our local paper and in the syndicate covering neighboring towns. In this way is public attention drawn to and focussed upon our activities and since they are worth while activities, interest once attracted is maintained, and so the good work goes on.

THE Columbus (Ohio) Motion Picture Council is the latest community-wide group which has developed from the active work of a local D. A. R. Better Films Committee. Mrs. Katherine A. Bryan, President of the Council, has sent a report of the Council's organization and plans which augurs well for the future. The report is as follows: "The Council had its inception when the Better Films Committee of the Ann Simpson Davis Chapter, D. A. R., began to publish recommendations of films that were designated as 'suitable for children' and 'wholesome and entertaining' for the entire family. The WAIU radio station invited the D. A. R. Better Films Committee to form an organization to review and broadcast, without charge, their recommendations of pictures showing in and around Columbus twice weekly following the change of program.

"The Council is purely philanthropical in character, it has solicited no funds, neither has it made a campaign for members. The purpose is to serve as a guide for parents and guardians of children in the selection of pictures they should see. Pictures that are educational, historical, patriotic and humorous in character are broadcast. No mention is made of films that are not recommended.

"The Council provides for a limited and selected membership which includes men and women who are affiliated as officers or members of the following organizations: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, Y. W. C. A., Y. M. C. A., Parent-Teacher Association, D. A. R., Child Conservation League, League of Women Voters, Catholic Women's League, W. C. T. U., Federation of Women's Clubs, Columbus Women's Club, Women's Association of Commerce, Virginia Wright Mother's Guild, Jewish Welfare, churches and other educational groups. New members are admitted only upon invitation and action of the executive board, which constitutes the membership committee. There are no paid officers. The personnel of the board includes a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, auditor and nine directors."

We were indeed gratified that Mrs. Bryan tells us that our Magazine contains just the service her organization needs and we are happy to be of service to a group so ably organized and touching such a large public effectively.

Merging Children's Amusements

ONE community which unites all of the activity for the entertainment of its children in a unique way is that of Albany, New York. This is done under the Albany Junior Film and Entertainment Guild composed of prominent women representative of many interests. The report quoted below shows at the same time the wide extent of the work and the avoidance of any overlapping in this method of conducting the civic task of looking after proper and wholesome amusement for the young people of the city.

The Guild works as a group and has no membership or dues, the money spent by the group being given by friends, through benefit card parties, by the Strand Theatre management, the Knickerbocker Press and the Albany Evening News. The Guild works in co-operation with the Woman's Club of Albany, the Albany Lotus Club, the Christian Mothers' Union, the Monday Musical Club, Court Mary Regis, Catholic Daughters of America, the Council of Jewish Women, Albany Colony, New England Women, Gansevoort Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Mothers' Club of the Third Reformed Church and the Parent-Teacher Association of School 16. From each of these organizations three representatives are chosen, including the better films chairman, to work with the Guild committee.

During the 1929-1930 season the Guild sponsored eighteen first run films that were suitable for children. A children's party was arranged by the Guild at the Grand Theatre. This was given by the Knickerbocker Press and the Albany Evening News. Another party, one of the big events of the year, also given by the Press Company and planned and supervised by the Guild, was the Hallowe'en party in the State Armory. At this party prizes were given for the best costumes and also for the best stunts presented by the children. The City Mayor was present to greet the guests. Between 6,000 and 7,000 children attended the party and members of the Guild were aided by women from the co-operating clubs.

Two used toy drives were also conducted. The first was at Thanksgiving and the second at Christmas. For the latter drive, Sherwin-Williams reconditioned the toys and William Walker, as Santa Claus, assisted in distributing them. During the toy drives assistance was given by schools and clubs in nearby communities. Pupils in the Albany Academy for Girls also contributed toward the drives. One of the big parties of the year was that given for children during the Christmas holidays at the Strand Theatre. The management provided some of the R K O features for entertainment. This party also was sponsored by the Press Company.

Two benefits were sponsored by the Guild. Both were given at the Strand Theatre, the use of which was donated by the management. At one, for the benefit of the Dr. Storey Memorial Fund, $300 was raised.

Another activity sponsored by the Guild was that of arranging classes in music, dancing and dramatics for the children at the Albany Orphan Asylum. The musical instruction was in the charge of members of the Monday Musical Club, one of the co-operating groups. A play presented at the end of the season demonstrated the work of the children. The instruments for the orchestra and the costumes were supplied by the Guild.

Three entertainments were given at the Home for Incurables and included a moving picture show, a song and dance recital and an ice cream party. At the tuberculosis preventorium the children were given toys, books, games, candy and favors. An entertainment also was presented here at Hallowe'en and moving pictures were shown during the year.

The season's activities closed with the Trinity benefit program given at Mid-City

Park in August. During the year about $800 was spent by the Guild in carrying out its program of activities.

Officers of the Guild for the coming year have been appointed. The executive committee made the choices. Mrs. Harold J. Hinman will hold the office of president for another year, and the other officers are Mrs. Joseph Gavit, Mrs. C. P. Norgord and Mrs. Charles White Nash, vice-presidents; Mrs. Frank W. Clark, executive secretary, Mrs. George Farlow, corresponding secretary, and Miss Lydia H. Gale, treasurer. The chairman of the Executive Committee is Mrs. Fred J. Stephens, and Mrs. Willard M. Douglas is associate chairman.

MOTION pictures outside the field of entertainment increasingly gain the active support and interest of women. An important example of this is the film activity of the Woman's Auxiliary to the Medical Association of Georgia, formed to extend the aims of the medical profession to the various women's organizations which look to advancement in health and education. The interest aroused in using motion pictures in the health education work crystallized in the passing of a resolution at the Fifth Annual Session of the Auxiliary as follows:

"Resolved, That the Woman's Auxiliary to the Medical Association of Georgia establish a Health Film Library. Money for this purpose may be contributed by county auxiliaries or by interested individuals. The fund shall be kept separate from all other State Moneys and used for the rental, carrying charges, or other expenses necessary. Be it further resolved, that each county auxiliary assume the responsibility of planning during the year a Health Program in each county using one or more Health Films. This program should be as far reaching as possible. There should be cooperation with the local Parent-Teacher Association, Schools, other Women's Clubs. If there is a local theatre, effort should be made to have the films shown there both at a special meeting and on public programs.

"Resolved, That this should be in charge of a Standing Committee known as the State Health Film Committee. This Committee shall make and keep a list of approved Health Films, both free and rentable. As far as possible the members of the Committee shall preview the pictures, so that they can give a personal recommendation."

Some of the films shown since this work has been undertaken are *Working for Dear Life, New Ways for Old, One Scar or Many, Bending the Twig, The Kid Comes Through, A Fair Day, The Knowing Gnome,* and *In Florence Nightingale's Footsteps.*

The Chairman of the Health Film Committee is Mrs. John A. Selden of Macon. "Last year," writes Mrs. Selden, "the Woman's Auxiliary to the Medical Association of Georgia sponsored fifteen health programs in different parts of the state." In addition to the securing of the films, Mrs. Selden is called upon to go about the state lecturing on the subject of motion pictures and health. She has also been very active in the work of the Macon Better Films Committee.

COMING EVENTS
FOR
Junior Matinee Observance

THEODORE ROOSEVELT'S BIRTHDAY
October 27th

Many fine pictures are available from the Roosevelt Memorial Association, N. Y. C.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK
November 10th to 16th

BOOK WEEK
November 16th to 22nd

and of course

HALLOWE'EN AND THANKSGIVING

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

FRANCIS C. BARRETT
HELEN CAHILL

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience. *Pictures recommended for the family audience* (12 *years up*).

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience* (18 *years up*).

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays."*

*Africa Speaks

THE Colorado explorer Paul L. Hoefler has brought back a thrilling film from equatorial Africa. The wild animals are effectively filmed and there are interesting shots of a pygmy tribe and of the unique disc-lipped Ubangi women.

For the family audience.

(Columbia—8 reels)

Big Boy

Starring ..... *Al Jolson*
Directed by ..... *Alan Crosland*
Screen story by Harold Atteridge

STORY of the Kentucky Derby with Jolson as a jockey who falls into the clutches of a gang of gamblers. The singing and acting of Jolson carry the picture.

For the family audience.

(*Warner—7 reels*)

College Lovers

Starring ..... *Marion Nixon*, *Jack Whiting*
Directed by ..... *John G. Adolfi*
Screen story by Earle Baldwin

TWO players on a college football team are in love with the same girl and this almost makes them forget the good old school spirit.

For the family audience.

(First National—7 reels)

The Costello Case

Starring ..... *Tom Moore*, *Lola Lane*
Directed by ..... *Walter Lang*
Screen story by F. McGrew Willis

A stirring crook melodrama in which a policeman helps two young people who have been involved in a robbery to clear themselves of a murder which took place on the same premises.

For the family audience.

(Sono Art-World Wide—7 reels)

Eyes of the World

Starring ..... *Una Merkel*, *John Holland*
Directed by ..... *Henry King*
Novel by Harold Bell Wright

A fine cast makes this picturization of the Wright novel concerning the love of an artist for a young girl an interesting one, despite its highly melodramatic quality.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—9 reels)

For Her Sake

THE first Swedish dialogue film to be shown in America. A light comedy built upon the triangle theme.

For the mature audience.

(F. O. Renard—9 reels)

Girl of the Golden West

Starring ..... *Ann Harding*
Directed by ..... *John Francis Dillon*
Play by David Belasco

A stirring picture of the early western days with the lovely Ann Harding in the role of the "only good girl in the mining camp" who protects the man she loves from the law. Other members of the cast give excellent support to the star.

For the mature audience.

(First National—8 reels)

Half Shot at Sunrise

Starring ..... *Bert Wheeler* / *Robert Woolsey*
Directed by ..... *Paul Sloane*
Screen story by James Creelman

TWO doughboys in Paris without leave have a great time getting into and out of trouble. The picture is replete with amusing nonsense, the stars doing their usual good comedy work.

For the family audience.

(R K O—10 reels)

Heads Up

Starring ..... *Charles Rogers*
Directed by ..... *Victor Schertzinger*
Musical comedy by Hart, Rogers, Smith and McGowen

A popular Broadway musical show furnishes this plot of a coast guard ensign who discovers liquor smugglers aboard the heroine's yacht and exposes the spurious suitor.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Her Man

Starring ..... *Helen Twelvetrees* / *Phillips Holmes*
Directed by ..... *Tay Garnett*
Screen story by Tay Garnett and Howard Higgins

MELODRAMA full of strong action laid on the waterfront of a foreign port. A girl is helped to get away from the life she is leading by a sailor who puts up a big fight.

For the mature audience.

(Pathe—8 reels)

Her Wedding Night

Starring ..... *Clara Bow*
Directed by ..... *Frank Tuttle*
Play by Avery Hopwood

AN amusing farce in which an American actress finds herself married to a man who is traveling under an assumed name, so naturally complications arise. Charles Ruggles contributes some very amusing moments to the film.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

A Lady Surrenders

Starring ..... *Conrad Nagel* / *Rose Hobart*
Directed by ..... *John Stahl*
Novel "Sincerity" by John Erskine

A sophisticated drama, excellently acted, of a woman who loves a man sincerely and a wife who loves her novel writing more. The wife realizing the greater sincerity on the part of the other woman surrenders.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—10 reels)

*Laughter

Starring ..... *Nancy Carroll*
Directed by ..... *H. D'Abbadie D'Arrast*
Screen story by Donald Ogden Stewart

DRAMA of a young chorus girl married to an elderly stock broker who can not understand her attitude toward life. Nancy Carroll repeats the excellent dramatic performance she gave in *Devil's Holiday* and is ably supported by Frank Morgan and Frederic March.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Leathernecking

Starring ..... *Eddie Foy, Jr.* / *Benny Rubin*
Directed by ..... *Edward Cline*
Play "Present Arms" by Fields, Rogers and Hart

COMEDY of the marines who keep things lively on the island where they are stationed. Good acting and amusing dialogue make the picture thoroughly enjoyable.

For the family audience.

(R K O—9 reels)

*Liliom

Starring ..... *Charles Farrell*
Directed by ..... *Frank Borzage*
Play by Ferenz Molnar

PHANTASY in which the rare quality of the story is heightened by the unusualness of camera work and backgrounds. "Liliom," a barker in a Budapest circus, commits suicide and goes to the world beyond. He begs for a second chance on earth which is especially granted.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

Madame Satan

Starring ..... *Kay Johnson* / *Reginald Denny*
Directed by ..... *Cecil B. DeMille*
Screen story by Jeanie MacPherson

A lavish production according to the DeMille manner, in which a woman who loses her husband's affections to a show girl employs a unique method to win them back. Good comedy is provided as a part of this spectacle-drama.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—13 reels)

Maybe It's Love

Starring ..... *Joan Bennett* / *Joe E. Brown*
Directed by ..... *William A. Wellman*
Screen story by Joseph Jackson

THE amusing antics of Joe E. Brown and the exciting football game played by the All-American team are the highlights in this interesting picture of college life.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Warner—7 reels)

*Moby Dick

Starring ..... *John Barrymore*
Directed by ..... *Lloyd Bacon*
Novel by Herman Melville

MELVILLE'S famous story in audible picture form, of the whaler who hunted down "Moby Dick," the white whale, to avenge the loss of his leg. The dramatic interest is intensified by the use of sound and John Barrymore, who appeared also in the silent version several years ago, presents with feeling the character of the whaler.

For the family audience.

(Warner—8 reels)

Once a Gentleman

Starring ..... *Edward Everett Horton*
Directed by ..... *James Cruze*
Screen story by George S. Worts

AN amusing comedy depicting the rise and fall of a butler in society. Excellently portrayed by the star in his inimitable style.

For the family audience.

(Sono-Art—World Wide—9 reels)

One Night at Susie's

Starring ..... *Billie Dove*
Directed by ..... *John Francis Dillon*
Story by Frederick Brennon

GANGSTER melodrama. The hero, brought up by an underworld woman as her own son, goes to prison for the girl he loves and while there becomes a famous playwright which causes more unforeseen developments in the plot.

For the mature audience.

(First National—6 reels)

The Pay Off

Starring ..... *Lowell Sherman*
Directed by ..... *Lowell Sherman*
Play by Samuel Shipman and John Hymer

A crook melodrama in which the leader of a gang befriends a young couple and when it becomes necessary he sacri-

fices himself for the girl. Sherman's skillful work helps a slight story.

For the mature audience.

(R K O—8 reels)

Playboy of Paris

Starring ..... *Maurice Chevalier*
Directed by ..... *Ludwig Berger*
Play "The Little Cafe" by Tristan Barnard

STORY of a millionaire waiter who is forced through a contract to retain his job. The story is slight and Chevalier does little singing but his charm and delightful sense of comedy make the film entertaining.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Santa Fe Trail

Starring ..... *Richard Arlen*
Directed by ..... *Otto Brower, E. H. Knopf*
Novel "Spanish Acres" by Hal H. Edwards

WESTERN in which a sheep herder arrives in time to prevent an old Spanish landowner from being despoiled by a sharper. Spanish setting and excellent scenery.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

*The Sea Wolf

Starring ..... *Milton Sills*
Directed by ..... *Alfred Santell*
Novel by Jack London

A stirring picture of life on the sea under the masterful and brutal "Wolf," captain of a whaler. There are a few scenes in which the cruelty is too realistic for some but the acting is excellent and this combined with notable photography makes the picture absorbingly interesting.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

Shadow Ranch

Starring ..... *Buck Jones*
Directed by ..... *Louis King*
Story by George M. Johnson

AN interesting western with fine photography. The star plays the part of a wandering cowboy who avenges the death of his pal.

For the family audience.

(Columbia—6 reels)

The Spoilers

Starring ..... *Gary Cooper*
Directed by ..... *Edwin Carewe*
Novel by Rex Beach

THE famous story of the battle between the miners and the claim jumpers in Alaska's gold rush days retold effectively in sound.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—11 reels)

Those Three French Girls

Starring ..... *Fifi Dorsay, Reginald Denny*
Directed by ..... *Harry Beaumont*
Screen story by Dale Van Every and Arthur Freed

AN amusing and noisy farce of an English nobleman in France who meets two ex-soldiers from Brooklyn and three modistes and they proceed to have an hilarious time.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—8 reels)

The Tiger of Berlin

A German dialogue film with a good cast. Interestingly told crook melodrama in which "the tiger" is exposed.

For the mature audience.

(Ufa—9 reels)

*Whoopee

Starring ..... *Eddie Cantor*
Directed by ..... *Thornton Freeland*
Novel by E. J. Rath

MUSICAL comedy revue in technicolor with excellent singing and chorus work. Eddie Cantor plays the part of a hypochondriac with highly amusing results.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—12 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

Outward Bound

(See page 8)

For the mature audience.

(Warner—8 reels)

Abraham Lincoln

(See page 9)

Family audience. Junior Matinee.

(United Artists—10 reels)

Old English

(See page 10)

For the mature audience.

(Warner—9 reels)

A Correction

The audience recommendation of *Hell's Angels* is "For the mature audience." The audience suitability was incorrectly given in the September issue. We regret this but since the film has not yet been generally released we believe this correction is in time to prevent any misunderstanding.

SHORT SUBJECTS

Barefoot Days

(Vitaphone No. 1062)

A crowd of youngsters protect their dog from the law.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Believe It or Not

(Vitaphone Nos. 1038 & 1053)

Numbers three and five in Robert Ripley's series of strange statements proved.

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel each)

China's Old Man River

(Around the World with Burton Holmes)

A trip up the Yangtze River showing the millions who live along its shore.

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

The Clock Shop

The decorative figures on clocks come to life and dance and sing in a charming technicolor setting.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

The Dogway Melody

An all-doggie film. Story of love and hate behind the scenes of a "snappy" revue.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Evolution

(Vitaphone No. 1022)

The growth of motion pictures from the earliest days.

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

The Fire Worshippers

Creatore and his Band furnish the musical background for the presentation of the legend on which the music is based.

For the family audience.

(Tiffany—1 reel)

Five Minutes from the Station

(Vitaphone No. 1051-2)

A clerk successfully entertains his boss.

For the mature audience.

(Vitaphone—2 reels)

The Gem of Agra

The beauties of the famous Indian temple of the Tap Mahal beautifully depicted.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Gliding
(Sportlight Series)

Interesting illustration of the art of gliding.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

The Glories of Nikko
(Around the World with Burton Holmes)

Interesting views of the Japanese city.

For the family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Grand Uproar

Very good cartoon of the animals attending a musical program.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Paramount—1 reel)

The Hard Guy
(Vitaphone No. 1036)

Troubles of an unemployed man, played by Spencer Tracy, and his family with a surprise ending.

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Humanettes No. 2

Cartoon with living heads inserted which talk and sing.

For the family audience.

(R K O—1 reel)

The Jaywalker
(Vitaphone No. 1061)

Amusing sketch showing pedestrians getting licenses and being ruled with an iron hand by the policemen.

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Jewel of Asia
(Seeing the World Series)

The leading city of Siam in all its European and oriental aspects is well presented.

For the family audience.

(Columbia—1 reel)

Jungle Terror

Travelogue depicting elephants at work and explorations in the heart of the jungle where huge snakes are encountered.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Kid the Kidder

College comedy in which a freshman reverses the initiation proceedings and gets the laugh on the crowd.

For the family audience.

(Pathe—2 reels)

The Land of Long Ago
(Seeing the World Series)

Interesting scenic of China with its narrow streets, teeming population and religious ceremonies.

For the family audience.

(Columbia—1 reel)

Looney Tunes No. 3

Animal cartoon.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Many Happy Returns
(Vitaphone No. 1055-6)

A wealthy but lonely man tries to celebrate his birthday alone.

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—2 reels)

Martinelli
(Vitaphone No. 1024)

The opera star sings the Temple Song from "Aida."

For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

The Opening of the Stockholm Exposition

A Swedish newsreel depicting the opening of the Stockholm Exposition with the King officiating at the ceremonies.

For the family audience.

(F. O. Renard—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review Nos. 37-39

For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel each)

The Singing Sap

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald exhibits his musical talent in hilarious fashion.

Family audience. Junior matinees.

(Universal—1 reel)

Spain's Maddest Fiesta

(Around the World with Burton Holmes)

This five-day celebration with its strange parades and odd sights in the bull-ring is excellently pictured.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Paramount—1 reel)

The Story Book Parade

The Children's Ballet in a delightful program of singing and dancing.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Strange As It Seems

One of the series of strange but true freaks of nature.

For the family audience.

(Universal—1 reel)

Strike Up the Band

Song cartoon in which the audience is invited to sing this old time popular tune.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Swing You Sinners

Cartoon of a guilty chicken thief who has a bad time in a cemetery.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—1 reel)

The World We Live In

Newsreel of various items.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—1 reel)

You're in the Army Now

Amusing sketch of Johnny Burke in the trenches. For the family audience.

(Paramount—2 reels)

Zampa

The overture "Zampa" by the French composer Herold forms a delightful musical background for the legend.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—1 reel)

(*Continued from page* 11)

gains with never a sign of repentance. He collects an unlawful commission upon the sale of some ships and persuades his stockholders to accept the contract. The amount of the commission is settled upon his grandchildren. A legal sharper gets wind of this transaction and proceeds to squeeze the old man. Sylvanus defies him but, realizing that he will face exposure, he proceeds to wine and dine himself to death.

The supper scene is the climax of the picture. Sylvanus feasts with the unction of a Roman senator. When his solicitous butler advises caution he threatens to discharge the faithful servitor and when his moralizing daughter tries to read him a lesson on temperance and abstinence he defies her, and persists in dying in his cups.

Mr. Arliss is the type of actor who has gained immeasurably through the advent of the talkies. Endowed with a rich and supple speech he can ring changes upon his vocal register which would have been entirely lost in the days of the silent screen.

It would be an easy matter to criticize some of the deficiencies of this picture. The plot moves slowly because its limitations are inherent in the handicaps of the hero. He is a semi-invalid who has to sit in a chair most of the time while the different characters enter and leave the room. The number of callers might seem to add to the artificialities of the plot. But the skill with which Mr. Arliss' performance surmounts these difficulties simply becomes an added tribute to his versatility as a screen actor of the highest rank.

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

Vol. V, No. 9 November, 1930

Marlene Dietrich in "Morocco" (see page 4)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Hard-Boiled Yeggs
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A Chairmanship Change

TO its members the National Board of Review announces at this time the election as Chairman of Dr. Walter W. Pettit following the retirement from that office of Dr. William B. Tower. Dr. Tower remains as a member of the Executive Committee and the Board will therefore continue to have the benefit of his active interest in its work.

Dr. Tower has been connected with the Board since 1916. This was the time in the Board's history when it was firmly organizing work on the principle of the selection and classification of films. Dr. Tower was avowedly in favor of this policy as opposed to that of censorship. For a long period after his affiliation with the Board he served on both the Review and Membership Committees. His interest was further crystallized by his election as a member of the Executive Committee and later in 1923 as Chairman of the National Board and its affiliated Better Films National Council. These two offices made many demands upon his time and interests. In 1918 Dr. Tower had been appointed to important work on the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church as Director of its Department of Records, Surveys and Research and as Editorial Secretary, nevertheless through the years he never failed in his loyal service to the National Board.

DR. WILLIAM B. TOWER
Retiring Chairman

Dr. Pettit who has served a number of years on the Executive Committee and who now becomes Chairman is known to many of those who have attended the Board Conferences. The National Board is fortunate in having in him, as it had in Dr. Tower, a Chairman who is willing to express his interest not only in words but also in deeds.

Exceptional Photoplays

COMMITTEE

Louise W. Hackney
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J. K. Paulding
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Walter W. Pettit
M. R. Werner

A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

Wilton A. Barrett

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

Morocco

Directed by.....*Joseph Von Sternberg*
Photographed by.....*Lee Garmes*
Play "Amy Jolly" by Benno Vigny

The Cast

Legionnaire Tom Brown.....*Gary Cooper*
Amy Jolly.....*Marlene Dietrich*
La Bessiere.....*Adolphe Menjou*

Produced and distributed by Paramount

MANY discerning commentators have felt, some even from the time of the early *Salvation Hunters,* that in Joseph Von Sternberg our screen had found its most interesting exponent—an experimentalist whose work would sooner or later parallel in its creative aspect the work of artists in other fields and mediums of expression. *Underworld* went far to substantiate this feeling. It had form, dramatic meaning, aesthetic purpose. It recognized the box-office, but it did not truckle to it. It was a silent film. Then came sound and dialogue. In its effort to reproduce the stage, the cinematic pattern of the motion picture, painfully developed through a span of thirty and more years, slipped back overnight to the verge of its crude beginning. What would Mr. Von Sternberg do with the destroying devils of the mike, the disk and the sound track.

Mr. Von Sternberg, it would seem, set out to find a proper use for them with a keen determination to preserve the cinematic pattern. He saw dialogue and sound as adjuncts and not as principles of fundamental change. After a period of testing in which he produced several worthy sound films, he now comes before his public with *Morocco.*

It is our purpose only to hint at its plot-material and the interest and authenticity of his characters. Neither, striking as they undoubtedly are, by themselves make it the outstanding film that is a definite step forward in the art of motion pictures, one of the most noteworthy films, many will think when they have studied it, that the sound screen has yet produced. However, some outline must be undertaken in order to give the tonal background to a sketch of the technical perfections of the production.

To the hot Algerian locale, then, comes a strange, exotic person, a young actress of the trooper's stage, adventuring, her antecedents never more than obliquely indicated. Once installed as a singer in the local cabaret, she comes by a great passion for a common soldier of the Foreign Legion, a company of which happens to be quartered in the town. A wealthy artist now falls in love with her, offers to marry her. The soldier having failed in his promise to desert and take her back to Europe, she consents to this marriage. But she ends up by following the Legionnaire into the desert, when he marches away the second time with his company, tramping after him with the native women, the camp followers, who cannot give their men up.

Thus, like all motion pictures of the front rank, the material is that of the screen alone, the narrative thread an exceedingly simple one. It amounts to the way it is embroidered. And here the result is that cinematic

pattern we have mentioned, brilliant, profuse, subtle, and at almost every turn inventive.

Morocco sets its sound in the background. Its speech is purely that of pictures, except where the pictures can be told more effectively by sound. For example: the Legionnaire is sent forward to capture a machine gun nest. You hear the put-put-put of the gun, at first in the distance, then nearer, nearer, as the soldier, whom you always see, creeps closer to it. The effect is wonderfully heightened, partakes of reality itself, gives the immediacy of self-experience. The capture of the gun is left in the air with a fading screen, and the suspense is kept like a bridge over to the following sequence of events. This sort of thing is unfailingly terse, cinematically economic, a cunning grasp of the power of suggestion as made possible by the image in motion and the sound that in the context of that image, and in association with it, can make another image of its own. It is the sort of thing that points the way to the method of the motion picture of tomorrow, and makes of *Morocco* a stimulating forerunner.

And again with the use of dialogue in this film: when a character speaks it is merely in substantiation of the thing the action has made you see and know. The artist gives his engagement supper to his friends. All is sumptuous, splendid, covered with light, gaiety and tender feeling. The tragic past of his fiancee is gone. Then the drums of the returning Legionnaires are faintly heard. You get the sensation of the stirring city in the warm night outside. And Jolly must tear herself away, must go to find her lover. There is no word spoken. Eloquently the silent screen speaks to us as of old. And when she is gone, you get the shot of the long, richly laden table with its startled, embarrassed guests, and its host at the head, left to his contemplation of the situation. He rises, for he must follow Jolly, just as she must follow the soldier, Tom Brown. Then Menjou, who plays the artist lover, says, and from the screen emanates not a mechanical voice out of the flat middle of a shadow, but living words from the human lips, quiet, moving and immensely real: "You see—I love her." How terse and how explanatory—yet it is the picture, the cinema, the parade of images, convoluting yet always leading to that moment, and not the sound device, that makes the simple utterance so effective. One could go on finding in this film a text book and finding in the firm and sinewy grasp of its director the resolve to bring the motion picture, with the new powers that science has given it, back to its own.

And because the readers of this review will possibly wish to know a few more things about *Morocco* other than these notes regarding its technology, it should be said that the photographic quality is frequently of the best (another point of return to the highest traditions of the screen before the advent of sound made cameramen careless and slovenly); that its atmosphere is not manufactured out of heated hokum, but arises from what seems, no matter how strange, to be real and in its place; and the acting of the cast—well, go see the picture when you have the chance, for under the handling of Mr. Von Sternberg, Menjou is at his level best in a role that could easily have become maudlin if not unbelievable, and Gary Cooper achieves a rough naturalness that gives one understanding and holds one's interest; but Marlene Dietrich, the newly risen star, shines forth, a personage indeed, something different on the screen, an actress to wit, a symbol of glamour, like whom there is but one other in motion pictures—and when you see *Morocco,* you will be reminded who that is.

One word more. As a study of the attraction that a man and woman of a certain type may have for one another—that can tear a woman from whatever of safety and pleasure her existence holds—*Morocco* is not unsubtle in its psychological reading. And this it is, perhaps, that leaves us feeling that we have seen something true if strange.

From the prologue of "Zwei Herzen im ¾ Takt"

Zwei Herzen im ¾ Takt

Directed by ..... *Geza Von Bolvary*

Photographed by ..... *Willy Goldberger*, *Max Brink*

Story by Walter Reich and Fritz Schulz

The Cast

Toni Hofer, composer ..... *Walter Janssen*
Nicky Mahler, librettist ..... *Oscar Karlweiss*
Vicky Mahler, librettist ..... *Willy Forst*
Hedi ..... *Gretl Theimer*
Anni Lohmeier ..... *Irene Eisinger*
Weigl, Hofer's butler ..... *August Vockau*

Produced by Tobis; distributed by Associated Cinemas of America

TASTES jaded by too unvaried an offering of musical films will find an "apperetif" in this tasteful picture import of a Viennese operetta. It might be expected that a film blending singing and dancing smoothly and harmoniously with the story plot would have Vienna, city of music, as the background. Therefore the German producers of this picture *Zwei Herzen im Drei-Viertel Takt* or *Two Hearts in Waltz Time,* as it is called in English, were wise to put their sound recording process to such appropriate use as that of telling a musical story where music flows as naturally as words. There is here no obvious bringing in of song for itself alone but the portrayal of real people who sing and dance and jest their way through life.

The story centers around that of a lost waltz, for not until an elusive melody is recaptured by the frantic composer can the operetta within the picture come to completion. Two young librettists, brothers, have written an operetta the music for which is the work of a Viennese composer, Toni Hofer. Since the verses and music are both highly pleasing to the Theatre Director all looks well for the future of the operetta but the one thing lacking is a waltz theme and

(*Continued on page 9*)

The White House Considers the Motion Picture

IN this twentieth century any study of social welfare would be far from complete without a measure of thought and discussion being given to the motion picture. The motion picture demands this special attention because of its extraordinary popularity surpassing that of any other one interest in the life of today. Perhaps more particularly can its importance be gauged when considering its relation to the child for the motion picture, being but little over a quarter of a century old, can be viewed from its beginning to end by the adult of today, to them a world minus the motion picture is not something that has to be imagined but a reality which they have known, on the other hand how many of the children today could picture life without the "movie." This being true it is pertinent indeed that when President Hoover planned his White House Conference on Child Health and Protection he should have had included among the divisions of study a sub-committee on Motion Pictures and Theatres.

The outline of this Conference has doubtless become known to all since it was called by President Hoover early in his administration but more specific interest will be centered upon it now as the findings of the various committees are to be made during this month.

The original group composed by the President consisted of twenty-seven leaders in the field of child welfare who were asked to become members of a Planning Committee to build up a greater organization which would make studies in advance of the calling of a conference.

Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, a physician and former president of Leland Stanford University, was made Chairman of this Planning Committee and Chairman of the Conference to be held. The Director of the Conference appointed to work with Dr. Wilbur and the Planning Committee was Dr. H. E. Barnard. This Committee, after careful study, outlined its purpose in the utmost simplicity. That is to find out what is being done for the child, to report its findings to the Conference, and make recommendations as to the future.

To facilitate and correlate the study it was divided into four sections. The third of these four sections is devoted to Education and Training and it is under this section that the Sub-Committee on Motion Pictures and Theatres comes as a part of the subject of Youth Outside of the Home and School. Dr. Lee F. Hanmer, Director of Recreation of the Russell Sage Foundation, is Chairman of this Committee and the members of the Committee are all people of wide experience in different fields of motion picture or better films activities. They are:

Mrs. Mary Allen Abbott, Professor of English, Teachers College, Columbia University; Chairman, Motion Picture Committee, Horace Mann School Bulletin.

Wilton A. Barrett, Executive Secretary, National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

Mrs. Elizabeth R. Dessez, Writer and Speaker on Motion Pictures.

Frederick H. Koch, Director, Department of Dramatics, University of North Carolina.

Howard LeSourd, School of Religious Education and Social Service, Boston University.

Mrs. Harriet H. Locher, Former Director, Public Service and Educational Department, Crandall Theatres, Washington, D. C.

Albert R. Lovejoy, Director, Cambridge School of Drama, Cambridge, Mass.

Augustus O. Thomas, President, World Federation of Education.

Mrs. Thomas G. Winter, Associate Director, Public Relations, Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Hollywood, Calif.

Colonel Roy W. Winton, Managing Director, Amateur Cinema League.

Roy S. Woodbury, Director, Juvenile Protective Department, Children's Aid Society, Buffalo, New York.

Each of these has contributed from his experience and study findings to be presented to the Conference when it meets in Washington, November the nineteenth to the twenty-second. The subjects treated are:

The Extent of the Motion Picture Industry.

The Legal Status of the Motion Picture.

Public Relations in Motion Pictures.

Children's Likes and Dislikes in Motion Pictures.

Special Programs for Children.

Attendance and Participation by Children.

The Neighborhood Motion Picture House.

Church Use of Motion Pictures.

Amateur Picture Making and Showing.

Youth and the Theatre.

Community Dramatics.

The material contained therein it is hoped will later be available for the consideration of interested study groups. In the meantime all those anxious to learn more of the Conference will have the opportunity to hear, over the radio on November the nineteenth, President Hoover's opening address and on November the twenty-second Dr. Wilbur's address summarizing the work of the Conference.

It is the earnest desire of the Conference Committee that the findings of the Committees may be made effective in local communities and therefore each member of the different committees is interested in publicizing the plan arranged by a number of national organizations of encouraging their branches to unite and meet in groups and "listen in." In this way, they believe, millions of others may "attend the Conference" and have their interest in childhood stimulated thereby. Several national organizations are planning for their local Directing Boards to meet as Boards for this purpose, where convenient to do so. It is being further recommended that local groups of young people, like Scout Troops, club activity groups and young people's socities be encouraged similarly to participate. Thus to a widened circle, the White House Conference and the child interests it seeks to further will be not a remote thing but will be more nearly something of which these local people are a part.

Motion Picture Study Clubs and Better Films Committees ever concerned in their work with junior matinees, family week-end programs and the motion picture and the child in general will find it worth their while to "attend by air" this Conference which as Dr. Barnard has said plans "to go below the surface of things as we observe them and to study ever condition which has any part in shaping the life of the child." Most certainly the motion picture as a favored recreation of children has a part here.

WHETHER motion pictures are looking up or looking down with the "talkies" sweeping the world without as much as a by-your-leave and with all sort of revolutionary results is a subject of discussion everywhere these days. Whatever the outcome, personally we believe it a solid-front-about for the sound pictures, at least there is one trend regarding which we can be most enthusiastic. That is the production of films designed especially to appeal to children. An announcement was made last June that such a production program was to be undertaken but there was some skepticism on the part of those interested when they called to mind the long struggle for suitable junior matinee prints and hope was about lost as to ever having available pictures which could be whole-heartedly sponsored for children's showings. But a few months

brings the answer to the doubts and here we have as a forerunner in Paramount's series the standard favorite *Tom Sawyer.* A fine cast presents the Mark Twain book upon the screen in a way to delight not only the children but adults too. If the preview of this picture had been for the purpose of checking laughs it would have kept the recorder continuously busy, so when this picture comes to town it will be like taking the children to the circus—they won't have all the fun! It is reviewed on page 18. Now we hopefully await *Huckleberry Finn* which Paramount plans to produce next and the rest of the series. Among other companies which have announced pictures of this type are First National with talkie retakes of *Boy O'Mine, Penrod* and *Penrod and Sam,* R. K. O. with a musical operetta *Babes in Toyland* and others. So those arranging junior matinees and family programs can take heart for the future.

Zwei Herzen im ¾ Takt

(*Continued from page* 6)

as the director has pronounced it unheard of to put on an operetta in Vienna without a waltz melody and the composer has pronounced it impossible to create a waltz melody to order, things seem at an impassé. However, the beautiful young blonde equally as essential in all operettas comes to life, as it were, before the composer and he finds in her the inspiration for the lacking waltz tune only to have it escape him again. But it is recaptured and the picture ends on the note triumphant.

This plot, as may easily be seen, can be told only by music and the telling of it is most refreshing with the gay melodies recurring in the story's unfoldment in a way to keep interest in the story and to keep the melodies lingering long after the picture has been seen.

It is this haunting quality of the picture perhaps more than anything else that makes it rank as an exceptional picture. While this is mainly captured through the music other elements making for a good picture are not lacking. The background is truly atmospheric, gained through careful direction, and the photography is good. There is a particularly picturesque prologue of the Vienna of Franz Schubert's day.

The parts are well played by more than competent actors, especially fine are the two brothers, the composer and his butler. And let it be added that comedy is quite a portion in this successful blending of harmony and picture. Since, therefore, music and comedy have been called universal languages this film will have wide appeal regardless of the fact that the dialogue is in German, for one and all can respond to the lilting tunes and the clever pantomine which tell the story of a waltz theme lost and won.

THE Governor of the State of Florida, Doyle E. Carlton, has announced the names of the members recommended by him and elected by the National Board of Review to serve as Florida representatives on its National Advisory Committee for the State. They are Mrs. James A. Craig, Jacksonville; Mrs. Norris H. Hensley, Tampa, and Mrs. Henry Talley, Miami; Mrs. Craig already being a member of the General Committee of the National Board and of the Better Films National Council. The recommendation of these names made by Governor Carlton is in line with a law passed nine years ago by the Florida legislature when the State went on record as opposed to state censorship but approving the plan of "selection" as advocated by the National Board. The passage of the bill at that time was designated among the many favorable comments summing it up as a "vote of confidence in the National Board of Review." A confidence which has, we are pleased to note, continued through the years and resulted in pleasant and helpful contacts. In making his nominations Governor Carlton has named three women actively interested in the work for better films in three of the large centers of the State.

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

Young People Review the Movies

By Mrs. Alvin L. Herald

A JUNIOR COMMITTEE in connection with a Better Films Council has many possibilities and many advantages. It is good for the young people because it helps them to become discriminating theatre patrons and students of the screen and it is good for the older people for in their review and recommendation of films instead of having to work on the principle of what they believe young people like they can have the benefit of actual and positive judgments and reactions. As to its possibilities in interesting and training young people the following report of aims and plans as sent to us by Mrs. Alvin L. Herald, Chairman, Junior Reviewing Committee of the Rutherford (N. J.) Better Films Committee, is an answer: "The ideal of the Committee is to train the girls to review pictures intelligently and to make the work interesting enough so that they will use their movie-going to some purpose. The ages of the girls vary from twelve to nineteen, the high school age. The group is limited by their own request to twenty girls, five from each class for they feel freer to talk in a small group. Their officers are a Chairman, Secretary and Corresponding Secretary. They fill out a ballot each time they go to the movies, then bring the ballots to the meetings and compare their reactions with the National Board of Review, reading aloud the review in the magazine. We always read the exceptional picture articles and have a discussion of the pictures. Then there is usually a short talk.

Our tentative program for 1930-31 is:

October—(First Meeting) Organization, arranging for new members to take the place of the seniors who left in June. (Second Meeting) What is the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures? Mrs. Herald's explanation of the ballots.

November—Talk by Mrs. Harry Grover, President, Rutherford Better Films Committee, Why We Have a Junior Reviewing Committee. Explanation of the adult National Board of Review work. Facts about and the ideals of the adult Better Films Committee.

December—The Juniors in charge of the adult Better Films meeting. The program will be:

1. The Kind of Pictures I Like (a series of papers written by the members and read by them).
2. What We Do at Our Meetings (papers by members).
3. A short skit—take-off on popular motion picture stars.

January—(First Meeting) Terms used in reviewing, stage terms, etc. Plays that Have Come to the Movies, Their Success and Failure, Miss Doris Law, High School Dramatic Teacher.

(Second Meeting) A trip to New York City—National Board review meeting.

February—Showing of amateur films.

March—How Talkies are Made—Mrs. Herald. Talkies and the Movies—Miss Law.

April—(First Meeting) Tea and new membership drive.

(Second Meeting) A trip to New York City—National Board review meeting.

May—(First Meeting) Talk by manager of local theatre.

(Second Meeting) A trip to New York City—National Board review meeting.

In addition there will be the usual work with the ballots and the discussions together with the study of the National Board of Review Magazine."

Included with Mrs. Herald's report was the report of the young lady acting as Secretary of the Committee; in concluding her report she says, "The Junior Committee as a whole enjoys this work and hopes that it will continue." Other committees which have not made junior work a part of their activity may find the young people of their community equally interested if they undertake it.

The Rutherford Committee in thinking of the young people of high school age is not neglecting the children of the community. The week-end family programs were started again for the fourth season on October the third when the Indian film *The Silent Enemy* was shown. On Hallowe'en the theatre, through the interest of the manager, was the scene of a big party under the direction of the Junior Better Films Committee.

THE Charlotte (N. C.) Better Films Committee has carried on its splendid work at home as well as gone far afield during the past season as the following, quoted from the latest reports of the Committee, shows: "The first fall meeting of the Charlotte Better Films Committee was held at the Chamber of Commerce on September the fifteenth. Mrs. W. L. Butt, Chairman of the Review Committee, explained that her Committee had been faithfully at work throughout the long hot summer, and that the reports of the various pictures reviewed showed the keen interest in and appreciation of the pictures. *Romance,* in which Greta Garbo starred, had been an especial favorite while *Journey's End* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* were pictures that would never be forgotten.

"In place of the regular program Mrs. Eugene Reilley, former President of the Committee, was asked to tell something of the pictures she had seen in Europe on her recent trip. This she very charmingly did and with all the experience of a member of a review committee she was able to give in detail just the fine points of interest of certain films and actors—not failing to tell also about the theatres and the music as she had observed them. In Budapest she had the pleasure of meeting a woman who was deeply interested in the children's matinees, and who insisted on Mrs. Reilley having afternoon tea with her in order to learn about our matinees in Charlotte and elsewhere in the U. S. A. Mrs. Reilley promised to see that plenty of material was sent to her upon this subject from National Headquarters.

"There was an interesting discussion of the plans for the Children's Matinees this winter. The best theatre building in Charlotte is to be used for the children on Saturday mornings. A high tribute was paid to the children for the splendid order and behavior maintained at the matinees at the Imperial last winter, with due thanks and appreciation to the Boy Scouts, Girl Reserves and members of the P.-T. A. who assisted the management in putting on the matinees under the guidance of the Better Films Committee. It was felt that an audience of such little ladies and little gentlemen deserved promotion to Charlotte's finest and best theatrical building and that a brilliant winter is assured for the children's matinees in such an attractive setting. School bands, orchestras and acts of vaudeville will be presented along with the feature attraction. The theatre organist will furnish the music on the organ at all matinees. The first matinee was given October the eleventh with *Light of the Western Stars* as the feature picture. Films for the shows will be chosen from lists furnished by the National Board of Review and various women's organizations."

A smooth-running program of better films activities deserves attention so we are passing on to our readers some words from a letter and report received from Mrs. George C. Harrison, Chairman of the Better Films Council of Rhode Island. She says in her letter, "My program runs along smoothly without much change, except to grow apace and keep me increasingly busy." Her report includes the following, "The Better Films Council of Rhode Island which the Rhode Island State Federation organized some two years ago numbers twelve state organizations, all taking a stand for better screen productions. Each state organization chairman receives our local bulletin and uses it in any way she deems most effective. The Council as a group does not interfere with the motion picture activities of any member organization. For instance, Girl Scouts and the Parents-Teachers and occasionally the Librarians have special children's programs. The Girl Scouts have their own preview committee with twelve hundred recommended lists published monthly in their own paper. The Council group helps when it can.

"The Federation distributes about seven hundred local bulletins per month. These go to all chairmen and presidents of the Council and are used for posting in strategic points such as libraries, Y. W. C. A.s, Y. M. C. A.s, clubs and some schools. They are sent to our first run theatres and the managers are pleased to have them and use them variously. To reach the public we have six broadcastings a month. Four given each month over a small station and two a month over a large station that more than covers the State. We begin this fall our fifth season of broadcasting in an effort to interest the public in the value of fine films entertainment.

"At the first Council meeting of the season new methods of sound reproduction and other phases of the complex mechanism of a movie house were interestingly described by Miss Lea Duhamel, Publicity Director of the Providence Paramount-Publix Theatre. She said that improved methods of reproduction have made well-nigh perfect synchronization of light and sound in the latest pictures. The use of disc records as a means of sound reproduction has almost ceased, and films now have a recording of sound on their margins. Porous screens and the placing of sound horns directly behind the center of the screen have resulted in much further improvement. Miss Duhamel also told of the efforts of theatre managers to maintain comfortable temperature and humidity in the movie houses. At Paramount four men are constantly checking ventilation and sound. Atmospheric conditions and the volume of sound vary widely with the number of people in the theatre and must be closely watched. Following the talk by Miss Duhamel there was a discussion on the subject of junior matinees. Mention was made of the fact that one of the Providence high schools will soon install the latest and best type of motion picture outfit."

THE Birmingham (Ala.) Better Films Committee is continuing its good work under an able corps of officers consisting of Mrs. Edgar Collins, Chairman; Mrs. Caroline Engstfeld, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. M. W. Snell, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Neil R. Wallace, Corresponding Secretary, and Miss Emily McBride, Treasurer. Working with these officers are representatives from the churches and the schools and seven Committee chairmen—Membership, Reviewing, Publicity, Speakers, Matinees, Benevolent and Telephone. In order to link the Committee's work more closely with the different theatres there are eleven chairmen of Visiting Committees for Neighborhood Theatres. Each month a Bulletin is sent to all the members containing information of the work done. The October, 1930, number marking the fourth anniversary of the inauguration of the Bulletin is indicative of the need and of the importance of this service which the Committee offers to its membership.

TOLEDO, Ohio, has a newly organized Motion Picture Council which combines the film activities of the community. The purposes of the Council as given in the constitution are as follows:

To unite all individuals and groups interested in the betterment of motion pictures for mutual benefit and helpfulness;

To encourage producing and distributing of films that have distinct social value and to promote clean, wholesome, artistic and educational films;

To select and support pictures especially suitable for boys and girls and families;

To encourage visual education in schools and community institutions;

To disseminate information concerning current releases in order that the public may exercise an intelligent selection of entertainment;

To encourage the use of photoplays in institutions as a means of spreading light, knowledge, happiness and health;

To promote co-operation between the Council, local exhibitors and producers. The Council will have regular meetings the second Tuesday of each month. Anyone interested in the work is invited to attend the meetings. Mrs. Lulu T. Gleason is President of the Council and has working with her a corps of officers and the chairmen of the following committees: Program, Membership, Law, Finance, Advertising, Telephone, Publicity, Social, Selected Performances, Music, Schools and Extension.

A community having no motion picture house, but, of course, this means it is a thickly populated suburban district and motion picture attractions are accessible in the next town, is not debarred from some civic interest in better films. It may be satisfactory to go to a neighboring town to see a certain picture but when it is the plan to use a film for some special purpose or benefit this must be in the home community where local interests are recognized and appreciated. Such a community, Avenel, N. J., has worked out a scheme and report the initial attempt highly successful. The Avenel Public Library Association stood sponsor of a plan to show a film in the local school for the benefit of the Association. They appealed to the National Board for help and picture suggestions for a program of a feature, a comedy and a flag trailer. After considering several suggested programs they decided upon *The Quarterback,* a Paramount picture suitable to the fall sport season, *Joyland,* a comedy from Educational which was greatly enjoyed according to Mrs. Grace C. Dickerson, the program chairman, in addition to the flag trailer. This latter was secured through the kindness of Mrs. Leon A. McIntire, New Jersey State D. A. R. Better Films Chairman. This was the first fall follow-up of interest which had been aroused in the early summer when the Association members had asked the Better Films Secretary of the National Board to talk to them on the community better films plan. They had counted on the support of the interested citizens for this program and found it forthcoming.

"BOYOLOGY as Applied to Motion Pictures" was the intriguing subject of the address delivered at the October monthly meeting of the Cincinnati (Ohio) Better Motion Picture Council by Robert Franc Schulkers. Mr. Schulkers is a writer of stories for boys and girls and a cartoonist and so could speak authoritatively and interestingly on this topic. Mrs. John Malick is the newly elected President of the Council. Working with Mrs. Malick and the other officers are Chairmen of Visual Education, Publicity, Ways and Means, Program, Reviewing, Music, Membership, Speaker's Bureau, Parliamentary Law, Selected Performances and Extension Committees.

MISS DOROTHY FULTON, Chairman of the Department of Motion Pictures of the Ohio Federation of Women's Clubs, when writing in regard to our National Board of Review Magazine, which we are pleased to have her say that she takes pleasure in recommending to her subchairmen, sends us a copy of the Motion Picture Goal of her division. Special attention is given to children's motion picture activity as stated in four of the items in the "goal"—"More children's matinees sponsored by clubwomen," "Encouragement of Family Night Programs," "No movies unless the parent knows the movie, no movies on school nights, no movies unless accompanied by an adult" and "More visual education in public schools." The division also stresses support of the endorsed pictures and co-operation with other organizations in the work of better films.

"There are," Miss Fulton says, "one hundred sub-chairmen in my division, a fair accomplishment for one year's work (with which we heartily agree). We hope to have many more this year."

DR. WALTER W. PETTIT, Director, Department of Community Work, New York School of Social Work, and Chairman of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, was the speaker at the October meeting of the High School branch of the P.-T. A. of Ridgefield Park, N. J. Dr. Pettit was secured for this occasion through the invitation of the Ridgefield Park Better Films Council as Mrs. A. C. Olson who is President of the Council is Program Chairman of the P.-T. A. branch and she knew because of her affiliation with the National Board that two of the many interests of its Chairman, Dr. Pettit, were education and better films. He has had wide experience in different branches of teaching and as a member of the Executive Committee of the National Board for a number of years and as present Chairman of the Board he is actively expressing his interest in the better films movement. A letter from the Association's president tells of the appreciation of the members for being given the opportunity to hear Dr. Pettit.

THE Washington State Better Films Association thru its junior matinees is striving to assist parents to provide worthwhile motion picture diversions for their children. The appreciation of this effort is shown by the growing attendance at the matinees. Pictures shown which have combined education and entertainment are *Across the World With Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson* and *Birds of Passage.* Women's clubs, Parent-Teacher groups and Boy Scout troops are among the organizations helping to make the matinees successful.

BETTER films work as a definite community activity to which a club can give whole-hearted interest and support was presented to the members of the Caldwell (N. J.) Women's Club at their October meeting. The speakers were Mrs. Harry G. Grover, President of the Better Films Committee of the neighboring town of Rutherford who explained in interesting detail the successful work of her Committee and Mrs. Bettina Gunczy who brought a message from the National Board of Review. The interest of this group in motion pictures is now taking definite shape as a Chairman of Motion Pictures has been appointed to work under the Civics Department and plans are being made to work with the theatre manager in the sponsoring of family week-end programs. A recent picture shown in the local house, an example of the kind that the Club is anxious to support, was the Byrd South Pole Expedition film which is so entertaining for all audiences and so deserving of attention.

SELECTED PICTURES GUIDE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

FRANCIS C. BARRETT
HELEN CAHILL

EDITOR

BETTINA GUNCZY

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience. *Pictures recommended for the family audience* (12 *years up*).

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience* (18 *years up*).

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays."*

Big Money

Starring.....*Eddie Quillan*
Directed by.....*Russell Mack*
Screen story by Russell Mack and Walter de Leon

COMEDY of an office boy having phenomenal luck at dice who becomes associated with a good-hearted gambler. They become involved in a murder as well as in matrimony. Very amusing dialogue.

For the mature audience.

(Pathe—8 reels)

Brothers

Starring.....*Bert Lytell*
Directed by.....*Walter Lang*
Play by Herbert Ashton, Jr.

A STORY of twin brothers in which the one adopted by a poor woman develops into a much finer man than the one adopted by a wealthy family. Bert Lytell is just as effective in the dual role on the screen as he was on the stage.

For the family audience.

(Columbia—8 reels)

The Cat Creeps

Starring.....*Helen Twelvetrees*
Directed by.....*Rupert Julian*
Play "The Cat and the Canary" by John Willard

THOSE who like thrillers will enjoy this picture for one creepy moment follows another as the heroine is almost driven mad by the weird happenings in the house which she has inherited.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—8 reels)

Check and Double Check

Starring.....*Amos 'n Andy*
Directed by.....*Melville Brown*
Screen story by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby

THESE two popular radio comedians make their screen debut a hilarious success with the problems of their taxicab and girl friends and their famous habit of mispronouncing words.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(R K O—9 reels)

The Dancers

Starring.....*Lois Moran*, *Phillips Holmes*
Directed by.....*Chandler Sprague*
Play by Sir Gerald du Maurier and Viola Tree

A drama of young love in which an English girl realizes there can be no real love without honor thus complicating the

lives of three people. The principals are good and Mae Clark contributes some dancing and singing.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

Derelict

Starring.....*George Bancroft*
Directed by.....*Rowland V. Lee*
Screen story by William McNutt and Grover Jones

THIS story of the sea is a typical Bancroft picture. Deprived of his ship through what he believes to be treachery on the part of the girl he loves, a ship captain proves himself worthy and all ends well.

For the mature audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

A Devil with Women

Starring.....*Victor McLaglen*
Directed by.....*Irving Cummings*
Novel "Dust and Sun" by Clement Ripley

A soldier of fortune who is fond of the ladies falls in love only to learn that the girl loves his pal. The story laid in South America is most entertaining.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—6 reels)

Du Barry

Starring.....*Norma Talmadge*
Directed by.....*Sam Taylor*
Play by David Belasco

DU BARRY, the famous mistress of Louis XV, is not particularly convincing as portrayed by Norma Talmadge, however the production is interesting and the story well told. As King Louis William Farnham, an old favorite, is brought back to the screen.

For the mature audience.

(United Artists—8 reels)

East is West

Starring.....*Lupe Velez*
Directed by.....*Monta Bell*
Play by Samuel Shipman and John Hymer

A drama with the background shifting from China to San Francisco's Chinatown. Ming Toy, a young Chinese girl, about to be sold in China by her father, is saved by a boy who brings her to America. The picture has the usual ending for themes concerning mixed races. Lew Ayres and Edward G. Robinson contribute to the worth of the picture.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—8 reels)

Extravagance

Starring.....*June Collyer*
Directed by.....*Phil Rosen*
Screen story by A. P. Younger

INTERESTING story of a young wife whose extravagance almost breaks up her happy marriage. The picture is tastefully produced and smoothly directed.

For the mature audience.

(Tiffany—7 reels)

Feet First

Starring.....*Harold Lloyd*
Directed by.....*Clyde Bruckman*
Screen story by Clyde Bruckman, John Gray and Al Colin

A regular Harold Lloyd comedy replete with fun and thrills. In this story Harold is an ambitious boy who desires to become a big business man and many are his escapades before he attains his goal.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Paramount—10 reels)

Kismet

Starring.....*Otis Skinner*
Directed by.....*John Francis Dillon*
Play by Edmund Knoblock

GOOD adaptation of the well-known stage play in which Otis Skinner was starred. His acting in the screen version as the beggar of Bagdad whom fate rescues

from poverty for a day, is excellent and will continue to keep him in high favor.

For the family audience.

(First National—9 reels)

A Lady's Morals

Starring.....*Grace Moore*
Directed by.....*Sidney Franklin*
Original screen story by Dorothy Farnum

AN interesting picture of the great singer, Jenny Lind, excellently interpreted by the opera star, Grace Moore. Reginald Denny, as the composer in love with the "Swedish Nightingale," does a fine piece of acting. On the whole the production is most pleasing.

For the mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—10 reels)

The Life of the Party

Directed by.....*Roy del Ruth*
Starring.....*Winnie Lightner*
Screen story by Melville Crossman

COMEDY of two girl clerk golddiggers who manage to acquire from a fashionable dressmaker a whole wardrobe and then flee to Havana where they try to ensnare a millionaire. A good vehicle for Miss Lightner.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—8 reels)

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*The Lottery Bride

Starring.....*Jeannette MacDonald*
Directed by.....*Paul L. Stein*
Operetta "Bride 66" by Herbert Stafford

ROMANTIC operetta. The heroine in a fit of pique becomes a lottery bride and is bethrothed to the brother of the man she really loves. The film abounds in splendid music and scenery.

For the family audience.

(United Artists—7 reels)

Only Saps Work

Starring.....*Leon Errol*
Directed by.....*Joseph Mankiewicz*, *Cyril Gardner*

Play by Owen Davis

A light-fingered gentleman visits an elite health resort posing as a detective in search of the bank money which he himself has stolen. Comical situations result and Leon Errol makes the most of them in his usual mad style.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

Renegades

Starring.....*Warner Baxter*
Directed by.....*Victor Fleming*
Novel "Le Renegat" by Andre Armandy

A drama of the Foreign Legion in which four men from widely different backgrounds share adventures of blood and battle.

For the mature audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

River's End

Starring.....*Charles Bickford*
Directed by.....*Michael Curtiz*
Novel by James Oliver Curwood

A story of the far North with interesting character delineations in which an outlaw successfully assumes the identity of the member of the Mounted Police sent out to capture him.

For the mature audience.

(Warner—7 reels)

Scotland Yard

Starring.....*Edmund Lowe*
Directed by.....*William K. Howard*
Play by Dennison Clift

PLASTIC surgery almost changes a criminal's identity but Scotland Yard cannot be deceived. A smoothly directed picture with the leading role excellently played by Edmund Lowe. David Torrence as the inspector gives one of his usual fine performances. Joan Bennett has the feminine lead.

For the family audience.

(Fox—8 reels)

The Silver Horde

Starring..... *Joal McCrea*, *Evelyn Brent*
Directed by..... *George Archainbaud*

REX Beach's tale of a man's struggle to succeed in the Alaskan fisheries is made into a fine picture. Evelyn Brent as the woman who proves to the man that she is far more worthy than his society fiancee, is excellent. For the mature audience.

(R K O—8 reels)

*Tom Sawyer

Starring..... *Jackie Coogan*
Directed by..... *John Cromwell*
Novel by Mark Twain

JACKIE COOGAN as Tom Sawyer here fulfills all the promise of his youthful screen appearances. Junior Durkin as Huckleberry Finn is entirely up to expectations and Mitzi Green as Becky Thatcher is her usual clever self. With the entire cast good and the book truthfully followed the whole production is excellent in every way.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Paramount—10 reels)

The Truth About Youth

Starring..... *Loretta Young*, *David Manners*
Directed by..... *William A. Seiter*
Play "When We Were Twenty-One" by H. B. Esmond

INTERESTING and well acted story of a wealthy man who arranges for his ward to marry the girl he himself loves.

For the mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

*Up the River

Starring..... *Spencer Tracy*
Directed by..... *John Ford*
Screen story by Maurine Watkins

AN exceedingly amusing and clever satire on prison life with a slight dramatic story interwoven. Spencer Tracy gives an excellent performance as the most popular of the inmates. For the mature audience.

(Fox—9 reels)

The Virtuous Sin

Starring..... *Walter Huston*, *Kay Francis*
Directed by..... *George Cukor*, *Louis Gasnier*
Play "The General" by Lajos Zilahy

A story of St. Petersburg at the outbreak of the World War in which a young wife goes to the commanding general to plead for the life of her husband, a successful young doctor, who has rebelled against military authority. A dramatic story well acted. For the mature audience.

(Paramount—9 reels)

SHORT SUBJECTS

Apache Kid

(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat rescues his girl from an Apache.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Columbia—1 reel)

Backfield Aces

(Knute Rockne Football Series)

Rockne illustrates some football tactics.

For the family audience. (Pathe—1 reel)

Believe It or Not Series

(Vitaphone No. 1093)

Mr. Ripley tells of strange things that occur. For the family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Camera Trails

Beautifully photographed Bruce scenic.

For the family audience.

(Paramount—1 reel)

Circus Capers

Cartoon of amusing stunts at a circus.

For the family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Cobb Goes Fishing

(Sportlight Series)

Irvin S. Cobb and Grantland Rice go fishing. For the family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Compliments of the Season
(Vitaphone No. 1094-5)
Christmas Eve skit of a reformed crook who befriends a girl.
For the mature audience.
(Vitaphone—2 reels)

Dance Classics
Beautiful dance numbers done in color.
For the family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Douglas Stanbury
(Vitaphone No. 1087)
Several selections well sung including "Trees." For the family audience.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Excuse the Pardon
(Vitaphone No. 1069)
Ralph Morgan in a finely acted skit of a convict, pardoned by mistake, who has to return to prison. For the family audience.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Flying Feet
(Knute Rockne Football Series)
Some of the intricacies of football.
For the family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

For Two Cents
(Vitaphone No. 1078)
DeWolf Hopper, a famous man on his deathbed, promises to die in time for the morning papers. For the family audience.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

The Fowl Ball
(Oswald Cartoon)
Oswald and his orchestra come to a sad end.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Universal—1 reel)

Fried Chicken
(Terry-Toons)
The hero proves that he can make good.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Educational—1 reel)

The Gorilla Mystery
(Mickey Mouse Cartoon)
Mickey saves his girl from the gorilla.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Columbia—1 reel)

Grandma's Girl
A father tries to bring up his daughter in the good old-fashioned way but grandma intervenes. For the family audience.
(Educational—2 reels)

The Great Train Robbery
An interesting revival of the first feature made by George Klein in 1903.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Syndicate—1 reel)

The Hal Johnson Choir
(Vitaphone No. 1080)
Excellent singing.
For the family audience.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

The Happy Hottentots
(Vitaphone No. 4393)
Comedy of two vaudeville boys.
For the family audience.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Hard-Boiled Yeggs
Eddie Buzzell tells the grown-ups a bed time story, a clever satire on the overworked underworld drama.
For the mature audience.
(Columbia—1 reel)

The Headache Man
(Vitaphone No. 1114)
Comedy of a department store head who has to take the blame for everything.
For the family audience.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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The Better Films Committee or Motion Picture Study Club plan has been found by many communities to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

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NATIONAL BOARD of REVIEW MAGAZINE

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Vol. V, No. 10 December, 1930

Richard Cromwell, new star, in "Tol'able David" with Joan Peers (see page 6)

Published monthly, except July and August, by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

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NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW OF MOTION PICTURES

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was organized in 1909 by the People's Institute of New York City as a medium of reflecting intelligent public opinion regarding a growing art and entertainment. This is still the Board's function, together with that of disseminating information on the subject of motion pictures and carrying on a constructive program having to do with community co-operation in the advancement and uses of the art.

The National Board is a disinterested volunteer citizen body with community group affiliations in various parts of the country. It is opposed to legal censorship and in favor of the constructive better films method. It is at all times glad to co-operate with any outside agency to encourage and guide the motion picture in developing its possibilities as a great and useful medium of expression.

It carries on its work through various committees:

The General Committee—a body evolved out of the original group organized in 1909. It is the appeal and central advisory committee of the National Board to which policies are referred and to which decisions of the Review Committee regarding pictures may be carried either by the producers or by the Review Committee itself.

The Executive Committee—composed of members of the General Committee, is the directing body of the National Board, charged with the formulation of policies, the election of members, the expenditure of funds and the supervision of all administrative affairs.

The Review Committee—the large group of two hundred and fifty members carrying on the actual work of reviewing the films. It is divided into subgroups which meet for review per schedule during each week in the projection rooms of the various motion picture companies.

The Membership Committee—which supervises the membership list of the Review Committee and recommends the names of proposed new members for consideration by the Executive Committee.

The Exceptional Photoplays Committee—composed of critics and students of the motion picture It reviews and publishes a critique of the finest films. Through this publication and by means of occasional showings of outstanding pictures to invited audiences, as well as through co-operation with community groups in sponsoring such showings, it seeks to encourage the artistic development of the motion picture. Its pioneer activity in this field which proved that the artistic picture will be supported by special audiences who believe in the aesthetic possibilities of the screen has done much to lay the foundations for the growing Little Photoplay Theatre movement of today.

All members of the committees of the National Board serve without pay. No member is connected with the motion picture industry. They are representative of varied interests and activities and many are connected with large public welfare organizations or educational institutions.

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Vol. V, Number 10 December, 1930 20c a copy, $2.00 a year

Annual Conference and Luncheon

THE Seventh Annual Conference of the National Board of Review will be held in New York City at the Hotel Pennsylvania, January 22-24, 1931.

The Conference program will be devoted to a study of the four main objectives of the community plan of motion picture activity endorsed by the National Board.

Notable speakers will contribute to this program and special attention will be given to discussion sessions for the mutually helpful interchange of plans and ideas. There will be two interesting evenings of the cinema. The final event will be the Sixteenth Annual Luncheon of the National Board in the ballroom of the Pennsylvania at noon on Saturday, January 24th.

It is the hope of the Committees and staff of the National Board that they will have the pleasure of greeting many of the readers of the Magazine at this Conference and Luncheon.

Will You Join the Luncheon? Pictured Here is a Former Luncheon Gathering.

What Shall the Children See

Selecting films for young people wisely is no small consideration of those concerned with the recommendation, support and sponsoring of good motion pictures in the community. There can be no rule of thumb and to the wisest of reviewers comes a doubt as to the ability of any adult to say what the younger people should or should not see. The following comment on current New York plays by Robert Littell in his column of the New York World, while voicing an equal uncertainty in the choosing of stage entertainment for young people, gives however some very illuminating opinions which it is our privilege to reprint as pertinent to film selections.—EDITOR'S NOTE.

WHILE all the graphs that record the fortunes of business, car loadings, unfilled steel orders and stock quotations go zigzagging down, down, down, there is one graph which, though seldom if ever charted in quadrille-ruled paper by theatrical statisticians, has been for years going steadily up and up and up. It is the curve of freedom of speech and subject on the stage, and its peaks mark new territory conquered from decency by the post-war tendency to say and do anything.

Taking 1905 as 100 and correcting for seasonal variation and long-time trend, this upward curve has recently reached the new all-time high of approximately 380. Still higher highs may confidently be expected in the future.

There will be sags and sharp drops in the curve from time to time, when some particularly outrageous show is raided, when bishops and officials protest, and producers, feeling the pinch of a technical reaction, go slow on dirt for a month or two. But it always climbs back after the drop, a few points nearer that incredible state of civilization in which any human act may be publicly represented and any of the words scrawled in chalk on blank walls may be found in theatrical dialogue.

There is another curve in this theatrical graph that vaguely parallells the first and follows it timidly on its upward course, as the bonds follow the stock downward. It is the curve of what parents allow their children to see on the stage—their children of theatregoing age, say from twelve to eighteen. It too has traveled upward in these last free-spoken, knowledge-seeking decades, but it is a much less bold and more gradual curve.

Taken on quarter-century span, it represents an enormous advance. Young people are allowed to see plays that their parents twenty-five years ago would have hardly thought fit for their own ears. Some of you may not think that this is progress of the right sort, but I think that you must agree that there is far less furtive matinee-going to forbidden theatres than there used to be. When the bars are down, it is no longer so much fun trying to squeeze through them.

It is almost always true of the moralist that he is willing to expose himself to dangers which he would have others forbidden to endure. His wrath at a dirty play seldom takes the form of complaining that he himself was bespattered; he will not admit that his own soul was damaged, but he is sure that everyone else will be permanently debauched. The same thing is true to a lesser degree when people of robust common sense witness a performance that is just over the line. It did them no harm, they will say, but they are not so sure that it is a good thing to make available to the general public. And parents whose own minds and hearts are made of leather in so far as indecency or plain speaking is concerned forget their own experience and become terribly timid where their children are involved. As if it were not the fate of practically all children to eat a peck of moral dirt no matter how carefully supervised.

From time to time parents will call me up and say, "My daughter, who is sixteen, wants to take some of her friends to the theatre. What play do you suggest?" The request for this kind of advice changes my character in two seconds. From having been a moral rhinoceros who prides himself on never being shocked and only rarely disgusted from having been a fanatical opponent of all kinds of censorship and a believer that dirt finds its own level regardless of restrictions, I suddenly turn Puritan. As the temporary guardian of a sweet young thing of sixteen, the theatrical jungle suddenly seems to me to be hung all over with forbidden fruit, to be teeming and crawling with all the vipers of vice and violence.

I never reach the sublime morality of the New York magistrate—or perhaps it was Senator Reed Smoot—who would rather have his child die than read a certain prohibited book, but I am several degrees nearer to understanding his point of view. Unsuspected bogies and ogres jump out at me from nearly every play I think of, and I end by recommending Shakespeare or Joe Cook. Sweet Sixteen has already seen Joe Cook, and she does not want to see Shakespeare as too educational for a holiday treat.

What else can I recommend? Is there anything that is not somewhere tainted; is there anything that will not put what her elders refer to as "ideas" into that young head; is there anything wholly sweet and sound and unpunctuated with cocktail shakers, crime or illegal cohabitation?

I run the current offerings of Broadway over in my mind. I forget the altogether innocent fun that most of them gave most of their audiences. I forget everything but the seamy side, the one scene or the one word that will make the mothers of Sweet Sixteen's friends furious at the mother of Sweet Sixteen.

The "Vanities" are nude; in "Flying High" there is a medical-test joke that cannot be described; in "Bad Girl" there is a child practically born within view of the audience; in "Strictly Dishonorable" there are violation of the Eighteenth Amendment and an undressing scene; in "Lysistrata" our first instinct roars and pillow-fights all over the stage; in "Pagan Lady" a parson is seduced by a bootlegger's moll; in "Roar China" girls are sold and men visibly strangled to death; in "Three's a Crowd" there is a man in a bathtub soaping himself before our eyes; "The Greeks Had a Word For It" bares the lives of three kept women; "The Green Pastures" shows a Babylonian honky-tonk.

And so on. Hardly a play but has some example that one would not care to have Sweet Sixteen and her innocent friends follow. Hardly a play but tells her something of a world their mothers would like to keep hidden from them as long as possible.

But hardly a play that (Sweet Sixteen being what she is, a sensible young model 1930) will so much as change the color of her cheek. So that the best procedure would be to treat her as if she were as grown up as she probably is and realize that no play alive can do her as much harm as eating too much candy or not putting on rubbers when it rains.

NATIONAL BOARD REVIEW

A moving picture reel of two hundred and fifty feet, amateur standard size, showing Scholarly Procedure in a Library is available for loan to other libraries from the University of Denver, Denver, Colorado. The projector is Model A Kodascope and is easily borrowed in any community. The picture was taken on the campus and in the University Library, but the reel is adaptable for use in other places. It is especially suitable for Freshman library courses in colleges or for high schools. A small charge is made to cover expenses. Any interested libraries please correspond with Miss Linda M. Clatworthy, Librarian, University of Denver.—*Library Journal.*

Exceptional Photoplays

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A department devoted to an impartial critique of the best photoplays. Each picture is reviewed and discussed by a Committee of the National Board composed of trained students and critics of the screen, who are the sponsors of this department. The combined opinions of this Committee are made available to the editors in writing their reviews. Each review aims to convey a comprehensive idea of the picture, mentioning both its excellencies and defects. This department seeks to include all photoplays of outstanding merit in the artistic development of the screen and thus serve as a means of bringing such pictures to the attention of discriminating readers.

SECRETARY

Wilton A. Barrett

EDITORS

Members of the Committee on Exceptional Photoplays

Tol'able David

Directed by.....*John Blystone*
Photographed by.....*Teddy Tetzlaff*
Story by Joseph Hergesheimer
The Cast
David Kinemon.....*Richard Cromwell*
Luke.....*Noah Beery*
Esther Hatburn.....*Joan Peers*
Amos Hatburn.....*Henry B. Walthall*
Buzzard.....*Peter Richmond*
Produced and distributed by Columbia

MR. HERGESHEIMER'S stirring tale of the young Southlands boy who rose to the occasion of rescuing a stolen mailbag and who at the same time settled a feud between two families by grimly destroying the three villains of the piece, became a motion picture classic when it was produced many years ago. It has lost nothing in this second film rendition with the adjuncts of the "mike." Care has been taken to see that it still remains a motion picture with all the virtues of the silent pattern and with discriminating use of dialogue and sound background. The result is one of the very best pictures of the year, a stirring and moving film beautifully photographed and acted, and one that will hold the interest of all age-types of audiences.

The story, while lending itself to direct transcription on the screen, since it is in essence true motion picture material, might nevertheless have been seriously marred by sentimentalizing or overdoing of characters to give local color and comedy relief. This *Tol'able David* does not err in that direction. Its characters are not stretched or made too sweet, too heroic or too blackly villainous. All of them are believable people, even Luke, a dull, mean and vicious brute, is recognizable as homo sapiens, a fact that is rather alarming. The episode where he calmly eats the nuts his half-witted brother keeps cracking while Buzzard gets nary a one is nicely inserted and by its naturalism lights this character, limned by the capable Noah Beery, with the proper satanic illumination. The love story of David and Esther is kept in careful proportion and never subjected to the strain that many pictures put upon their romantic themes. Joan Peers as Esther is beautifully cast and she remains an appealing figure throughout the film. And David in the hands of Richard Cromwell many, we are sure, will think is the very lad Mr. Hergesheimer had in mind when he set him down on paper. Richard Cromwell is a newcomer to the screen, without previous experience, we understand, in pictures. He is one of this film's best assets—not an actor playing a part so much as the boy himself, yearning to be a man and to meet the responsibilities of manhood's estate. He rises with fine imagination to the great scene, that in which, in order to recover the mailbag Luke has stolen, he kills the three Hatburns—brutal bringers of so much affliction on his family, the Kinemons. Here he is, as he should be, the frightened boy brought to the pitch of a deadly heroism by bodily torture and the desperation of fear. He makes it plain that David's hatred would not have driven him

Character types in "Tol'able David"

to it of itself. The character in his grasp is no mere instrument of feudal antagonism, he is a hero in the pure sense. And the actor's management of the role of David at this point is powerful and convincing. It is the high point of a film that throughout is impressive because of its sincerity in projecting cinematically a chain of circumstances that is essentially true and strong. One other character in *Tol'able David*—although it is only a bit—particularly stands out, that of Amos Hatburn played by the veteran—and one of the greatest veterans of motion pictures—Henry B. Walthall. How subtle and wise in his understatements is this actor. His Amos is a living figure, pathetic and gentle, veritable in his relationship of father to the Esther who loves David and suffers for him.

For the rest of the cast there are only words of praise, and for John Blystone, the director, the credit of making, we repeat, one of the authentic films of the year.

Laughter

Directed by.....*H. D'Abbadie D'Arrast*
Photographed by.....*George Folsey*

Screen story by H. D'Abbadie D'Arrast

The Cast

Peggy Gibson.....*Nancy Carroll*
Paul Lockridge.....*Fredric March*
C. Mortimer Gibson.....*Frank Morgan*
Ralph Le Saint.....*Glenn Anders*
Marjorie Gibson.....*Diane Ellis*

Produced and distributed by Paramount

THIS film marks the furthest step forward of its director, H. D'Abbadie D'Arrast. Some critics have found in it qualities of similarity with *Holiday*. This is a mistaken evaluation, it would seem, for *Holiday*, superior as it may

be, is for the greater part a talkie, whereas *Laughter* is distinguished for its basic cinematic character. It belongs to the category of those newer films so definitely seeking relation to the pre-sound art of the motion picture, those films in which sound accompaniment and sound dialogue are being relegated more and more to their proper places, the first into the action's background to point out by suggestion, rather than to smother by over-emphasis, the time, feeling and dramatic movement of the piece, the latter as equivalent for the old printed spoken titles.

Mr. D'Arrast has taken only a few threads into his hands for the making of *Laughter,* but he has handled them with rare deftness and illumination, and his meaning shines clear. They make the episodic plot of a gay and life-loving girl who has been an actress and now finds herself married to a stodgy, unimaginative and repressive man of great means, and, at the same time, finds herself still in love with the young musician of her Paris days who has looked in on her life again at the psychological moment. She saves her step-daughter from the perils of a vindictive elopement with another artist who is really in love with her, and she saves her own happiness by telling her wealthy husband that it can be no go for them, thus soberly and candidly grasping her chance for laughter—the humor and joyousness of living—with the zestful, humorful and joyous musician.

The surface of the film is comedy, often strangely flashing and brilliant and always light-footed, but under this surface is a serious and moving story with swift currents of drama which arise out of the tempera-

Nancy Carroll in "Laughter"

ments of the characters and which critical analysis proves to be authentic. *Laughter* reveals unusually fine and sensitive craftmanship, indeed it shows Mr. D'Arrast to be definitely one of our best directors.

The cast has worked with that technique of understatement calculated to give the film fine shading and to suggest subtly its implications. Its points are made briefly and swiftly and the result is a holding together of all its parts on a steadily rising plane of interest. Miss Nancy Carroll stands out as a comedienne and actress of real distinction. Fredric March has élan and conviction. And Frank Morgan, as the man of wealth and spiritual rigidity, turns his part into a recognizable individual upon whom the arrows of irony break only to leave him the more baffled.

Further than this, *Laughter* does one great service for the screen and its social import—it says quite clearly, something that few films do, that material success can sometimes be the wrong goal for human happiness, and that is a good thing for an American motion picture to say.

NOTE: *Laughter* was reviewed by the National Board of Review several months ago. This comment is printed at this time, when the National Board is publishing its list of the ten best films of the year, in which *Laughter* is included.

Soil

Directed by.....*Alexander Dovzhenko*

Photographed by .....*Danil Demutzki*

Produced by WUFKU; distributed by Amkino

SOIL—the work of the young poet of the cinema, Alexander Dovzhenko, director of that o'er-leaping film, *Arsenal*—is the most recent of the silent films from the Ukraine shown in some of the Little Theatres here. *Soil,* in all probability, will have just as limited a distribution in the United States, perhaps even less, but its existence, since it is a thing of beauty and artistic merit, can not be passed by in this department devoted to recording the cinema of distinction, wherever produced, when an example such as *Soil* reaches our notice as being exhibited, even in a limited way, in this country.

The story of *Soil* is based upon the life of the Ukrainian peasants of today and on the social changes that are affecting their living and thinking. Some of these changes are regarded in this film, if one reads under the surface, as being not altogether happy ones in the mind of the director, or rather in his feelings. Dovzhenko, it would appear, is too much an artist and too much in love with the color and folklore of the past to give his talents altogether wholeheartedly to the propagandizing of an order that is new. Through all of *Soil*—in the coming of the machine to the farm, in the decision to bury the young peasant leader, killed by a fanatical and reactionary kulak, without the services of the church—one can perceive a nostalgic touch. Dovzhenko faces bravely the future with its possible new beauties and benefits, but he cannot bring himself to turn his back completely on the traditions of the primitive and closer-to-the-soil day that he and his people have put behind them. His is, therefore, perhaps the most pregnant treatment of the Russian peasant that the screen has witnessed. It is surely the most beautiful and tender. He sees life as a matter of birth and exaltation, but he also sees the meaning of death. No one of feeling who has seen *Soil*—and there will be few who have seen it—can soon forget the burial of the murdered boy, with the low-hanging blossoms of spring brushing the serious, young, dead face, as his bier is borne to the grave on the shoulders of his singing comrades.

Better Films Forum

EDITOR: Bettina Gunczy

Department of the Better Films National Council

THE Cleveland (Ohio) Cinema Club long active in the better films movement, having been organized in 1917, is carrying on a most extensive program of activity and publicity under the present corps of officers.

Better motion pictures for children in the neighborhood theatres is one aim of the organization. In carrying out this aim the Club is working with the exhibitors in plans to have suitable films for children shown at these theatres over the week-ends, with films for older people to be featured during the first part of the week.

The Club as an authority on all local matters pertaining to the screen was called upon for an expression of opinion when the question arose over the banning by the Ohio Board of Film Censors of the prison picture, *The Big House*. The Club president, Mrs. Frank J. Yeager, was interviewed and speaking for the Club she was quoted in the papers as being opposed to the suppression of this film which the Club Bulletin had listed as an excellent picture for adult audiences.

The Club Bulletin is a very "meaty" publication listing selected pictures with short descriptions and audience classifications, news notes of the Club's activities and interesting thoughts on various phases of the motion picture. Three quotations from a recent bulletin will show how much is said in so little space in these pamphlets and when the large distribution of the Bulletin is considered there is little doubt but that the Club work is in this fashion being presented wisely and widely to the public.

Quoting from the Bulletin:

"Motion Pictures for Children

At the present time the number of children attending motion pictures is estimated to be about eight million each week. Generally speaking the commercial picture does not meet the needs of the child or the young people of the nation. This important fact must be taken into consideration and ways and means found to protect the child from subtle or sophisticated subject matter that is far beyond his comprehension. In the city of New York many children are numbered among the audience of the newsreels, especially on Friday night and Saturday. There are many junior matinees going on in various parts of the country, but there are not enough of these special showings for the youth and young children. Children like jolly pictures, good animal stories and, of course, they love adventure and "Westerns." The picture entitled *Byrd at the South Pole,* is one of the outstanding pictures of the year. It was the kind of picture that every young person should see."

"The Bookcase

Are you familiar with the magazine devoted to better films? The National Board of Review Magazine is the official organ of the Better Films National Council. What do you know about films as factors in our international relationships? A list of books concerning the motion picture industry and its history is on file and may be obtained by writing to Bulletin manager or secretary."

"What the Cinema Club Stands for

The Cleveland Cinema Club takes up its work for 1930-31 with the hope of serving the community to the best of its ability. It desires to sponsor and spread the news of all fine things that are being done in the motion picture world, and bring to the attention of the public films that create clean, healthy entertainment, outstanding educational films of value, and especially those films that emphasize spiritual values to the extent of being an actual incentive and spur for better citizenship. The aim of the Club is constructive, intelligent criticism . . ."

IMAGINE the joy and pride registered by the children of Macon (Ga.) at a Junior Matinee sponsored by the Better Films Committee when the big feature was a dog show in connection with the showing of a Rin-Tin-Tin picture, *On the Border*. The young masters and mistresses paraded their canine pals upon the stage and though there was bedlam for a while it was much enjoyed by everyone and appropriate prizes were awarded the winners. The ideas of this Better Films Committee seem to have no limit as to originality and benefit to the community. Another matinee held on Jane Addams' birthday had as the admission price any out-grown or discarded garments which were turned over to the Society for Organized Service to distribute, an appeal having been made by them to the citizens of Macon for clothes, as it had been discovered that there were many children who could not attend school for lack of clothes and text books. Six hundred bundles ranging from one to seven garments each were received.

An Armistice Day program featured a prologue presenting the flags of twenty-seven nations under the direction of a co-operating teacher of one of the schools and the community singing of such songs as "America, the Beautiful" and "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" was enthusiastically received. A flag trailer loaned by the Mary Hammond Chapter, D.A.R., a feature picture and the distribution of small flags of the Allies as favors completed this patriotic program. The fine Indian film *The Silent Enemy* was sponsored with a most extensive tie-up by the Macon Committee. Letters were sent to all the school principals and teachers urging them to impress upon their pupils the value of this unusual film, the Boy Scout Organization and the ministers when called upon gave their willing support and the result was reported most extraordinarily successful. The schools having the first and second largest percentage present were awarded prizes, the printed ballots for each school having been distributed to them by the Committee. The principals of the various schools were invited by the manager to be guests of the Committee at a preview of the film so that they might judge for themselves its educational value.

An unique plan offering a wide tie-up with the schools has recently been initiated by this Committee in an announcement sent to all the teachers in the city and the county and other interested individuals. The introduction says, "The Macon Better Films Committee, desiring to be of service, wishes to submit the following plan for your approval: There is a vast number of short educational reels which could be correlated with the school work of the seven grammar grades, the five high school classes and the colleges; also with the work and interests of many organizations and individuals. On each Saturday, at the regular junior matinee, the Committee will be glad to show—as long as you desire—some one of the films on any of the following subjects. Two weeks notice of any film desired is required as the subjects are constantly in demand. Of course, a request for the screening of the film will incur no money obligation on the part of the individual nor of the organization—just the usual admission price to the matinee." There is then a listing of subjects with sub-divisions and the number of films available of which the following is an example:

"Agriculture

(a) Cotton—6 subjects
(b) Sugar—10
(c) Wheat—4

Livestock

(a) Cattle—6
(b) Meat products—8
(c) Dairy products—13."

Other subject heads are Pests and Dangers, Rural Life and Farm Engineering, Forestry and Forest Conservation, Soils and Soil Conservation, Art, Music and Architecture, Astronomy, Biography, Chemistry, Civics and Patriotism, and many, many more. The concluding paragraph says: "In

addition to screening any of the above subjects at your request, we shall be delighted at any time to secure any feature picture you may select, its showing to be determined by the date of its availability."

As visual education is an important phase of committee better films activities this plan is indeed a happy one mutually helpful to the Committee and schools for it assures the co-operation of the schools in the work of the Committee and it aids the schools in their teaching work.

AMONG the visitors to the office of the National Board within recent weeks were Mrs. Hugh A. Smith and Mrs. Orin Baker of the affiliated Rochester (N. Y.) Better Films Council. It was a stimulating visit as so many worthwhile undertakings by this active Council were reported and a number of questions were asked which lead to thought-provoking discussions.

The first meeting of the year of this Council was held October 22nd. Twenty organizations were represented and the topics discussed were "Purposes and Membership" by Dr. Thomas S. Mutch, minister of the Third Presbyterian Church, "Publicity and the Photoplay Guide" by Mr. George David, dramatic critic of the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, and "The Exhibitor's Viewpoint" by Mr. Livitz of the Monroe Theatre. Dr. Mutch congratulated the Council on what it had accomplished in the past year and expressed the hope that it would enlarge its work by attempting some definite project of study such as a plan for raising the standard of motion picture appreciation just as the standard for good music has been raised among the high school pupils of the city. Dr. Mutch has made practical use of the Council's recommendations of films by using a reference to the Photoplay Guide of the Better Films Council published in the local paper in his church bulletin, calling attention to the fact that a file of the guides is available in the church office.

Mrs. Robert Rowe, President of the city Parent-Teacher Association which organization is co-operating closely with the Council asked Mrs. Smith to serve on a committee sponsoring Children's Saturday Morning Movies. The first matinee was held October 18th, the feature picture being *With Byrd at the South Pole* and an episode of the Rin-Tin-Tin serial *The Lone Defender.* These matinees are put on weekly by the manager of the large Eastman Theatre. The Council is now considering similar matinees in the neighborhood houses. The second matinee's picture was *The Virginian.* The Little Theatre in Rochester is also running special Saturday morning performances for children. The classic *Alice in Wonderland* started the season; a later matinee had as the feature *The Kick-Off,* this program was supplemented by the short subject *Nature and the Poet* from a poem by William Cullen Bryant.

The Council is now planning for an invitation showing of an unusual picture in order to bring its work in this fitting way to the attention of a large group made up of those interested in the many uses of the motion picture outside of the field of entertainment.

THE committee which selects films for the children's movies at the Little Theatre in New Haven (Conn.) chose for a recent matinee the picture, *Frozen North,* in which the wonderful dog Rin-Tin-Tin plays the principal part. There was also a "Big Boy" comedy, this series being particularly popular this year. An orchestra of junior members is being organized which will play at a future date at the children's performances. The pictures are shown as usual at 10:30 and 2:30 o'clock on Saturdays. The executive committee of the Little Theatre Guild has as its president Professor William Lyons Phelps. Mrs. Jack Crawford who is the secretary of the Guild and chairman of the motion picture committee called at the National Board offices for a discussion of children's pictures when in New York recently looking for suitable prints for the matinees.

THE unique Little Picture House in New York City has solved the problem of how to provide a program which will not bore the older children while entertaining the younger ones or on the other hand tire the younger ones while entertaining the older ones, by arranging two special series of Saturday morning pictures.

The first of the series for *children* took place at the Little Picture House on Saturday morning, November 15th. The Film Bureau Committee on Saturday Morning Pictures was able to announce that the house was entirely sold out for the initial performance with the exception of the front row and seats on the extreme side. The dates for the future showings in the children's series are January 10th, February 4th and April 11th. In this series suitable short subjects are chosen for children consisting of animal pictures, fairy tales and animated cartoons.

The first of the series of Saturday morning pictures for *young people* will take place on December 13th, with a presentation of *The Lady of the Lake,* a sound picture from Sir Walter Scott's well known poem, and *The Wizard's Apprentice,* a musical novelty based on the music by Dukas. In this series four classics of literature will be presented and the pictures selected by the Committee will be those which follow the original text most closely. The three additional morning screenings in this series will be held on January 17th, March 14th and April 18th. The dates have been so arranged that they do not conflict with the Schelling concerts so popular with the young people of New York.

THE Contemporary Club of Newark (N. J.) held a recent meeting under the auspices of the Civic Department and the Better Films Committee combining two of the many interests of the Club. The former interest was treated by Senator Joseph Wolber and Commissioner Wallace J. Ellis of the State Department of Institutions, and the latter by Dr. Louis I. Harris who spoke on the topic "A Doctor's Viewpoint on Motion Pictures," a subject to which he has given consideration as a member of the Executive Committee of the National Board of Review. Dr. Harris became interested in motion pictures while Health Commissioner of New York City as he recognized that the mental health of a people is equally as important as the physical health and that the films having come to play so big a role in every community obviously affect the mental health of both children and adults. Dr. Harris' position was one therefore which served to relate the two subjects of the afternoon's discussion. In times of economic depression moving pictures and the theatre have proven to be a wholesome tonic, Dr. Harris said, adding, "We see too much of realities in our everyday life and we desire illusion." Dr. Harris in speaking of the motion picture in relation to children advised that parents should give the same supervision over them that they do their children's education.

The Chairman of the Better Films Committee is Mrs. William Schuff who is untiring in her efforts and is continually adding to her Committee in order to be better able to bring the work of better films to a larger public.

THE Jacksonville (Fla.) Better Films Council held its second fall meeting on November the sixth at the Seminole Hotel. Mr. W. M. Marr, the president, who is Scout Executive of the Greater Jacksonville Council, Boy Scouts of America, presided. An unusually large attendance of members and also managers of the local theatres were present. Interesting discussions were held about outstanding pictures that have been shown during the last month in the local theatres, and announcements made of unusual pictures to be shown during the coming weeks. Reports were made in reference to the children's matinees held every Saturday morning at the Florida Theatre.

(*Continued on page* 19)

Selected Pictures Guide

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Consists of approximately 250 trained members representative of widely varied interests who volunteer their services for the review of pictures.

A department devoted to reviews of the best popular entertainment and program pictures. Each picture is reviewed by a group of the Review Committee of the National Board of Review. The choice of the pictures included is based upon principles of selection developed through long study of public preference as to what constitutes good screen entertainment. The consensus of the Review Committee forms the basis for the reviews and audience recommendations of the pictures. This department seeks to furnish the reader with a guide to the pictures most worthy of popular theatre patronage.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

Francis C. Barrett
Helen Cahill

EDITOR

Bettina Gunczy

Key to Audience Suitability

Family audience. *Pictures recommended for the family audience* (12 *years up*).

Mature audience. *Pictures recommended for the adult audience* (18 *years up*).

Junior matinee. *Pictures suitable for special showings to children under twelve.*

**—Pictures especially interesting or well done but not rated for "Exceptional Photoplays."*

*The Big Trail

Directed by.....*Raoul Walsh*

Starring.....*John Wayne*, *Marguerite Churchill*

Screen story by Hal G. Evarts

EXCELLENT photography and notable direction in mass movements mark this spectacle of the covered wagon days. Unlike the former pictures of pioneer life the silence of the broad open spaces is now filled with the sound of the moving caravan, the Indians' war whoops, the raging elements and the thud of the buffalo herds.

Family audience.

(Fox—11 reels)

Fast and Loose

Directed by.....*Fred Newmeyer*

Starring.....*Miriam Hopkins*

Play "The Best People" by David Gray and Avery Hopwood

A good story of a modern young woman and her brother who decide to marry according to love rather than family dictates. The cast is good. Miriam Hopkins and Charles Starrett, two popular stage stars, are a pleasing addition.

Mature audience.

(Paramount—7 reels)

Follow the Leader

Directed by.....*Norman Taurog*

Starring.....*Ed Wynn*

Based on musical comedy "Manhattan Mary" by William K. Wells

THE "Perfect Fool," a title which has characterized Ed Wynn in one of his stage plays, is true to form in this laugh-provoking and ridiculous comedy. He becomes entangled in a gangster's plot to kidnap a girl and incidentally kidnaps the wrong girl.

Family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

*Just Imagine

Directed by.....*David Butler*

Starring.....*El Brendel*

Screen story by DeSylva, Brown and Henderson

A fantastic comedy laid in the distant year 1980. A man who has left this planet in 1930 returns and finds himself in a strange world fifty years later. Clever ideas and scenic effects contribute to the atmosphere of the production.

Family audience.

(Fox—11 reels)

*Lightnin'

Directed by.....*Henry King*
Starring.....*Will Rogers*
Play by Frank Bacon and Winchell Smith

WILL ROGERS is excellent in the title role of this well known stage comedy. The story concerns a slow moving, slow talking character, "Lightnin' Bill Jones," who runs a hotel for those seeking a divorce in the Western courts, a part of which Mr. Rogers makes the most.

Family audience.

(Fox—10 reels)

Madonna of the Streets

Directed by.....*John Robertson*
Starring.....*Evelyn Brent*, *Robert Ames*
Novel "The Ragged Messenger" by W. B. Maxwell

DRAMA of a girl who believing herself deprived of a fortune by a young man in charge of a mission seeks to regain it by a plot which develops otherwise than according to her plans. Evelyn Brent gives an excellent performance.

Mature audience.

(Columbia—8 reels)

Man to Man

Directed by.....*Alan Dwan*
Starring.....*Phillips Holmes*, *Grant Mitchell*
Story "Barber John's Boy" by Ben Ames Williams

A finely acted picture blending well comedy and pathos. The story laid in a small mid-western town tells of a boy's shame for his father who has served a prison sentence.

Family audience.

(Warner—7 reels)

*Min and Bill

Directed by.....*George Hill*
Starring.....*Marie Dressler*, *Wallace Beery*
Novel "Dark Star" by Lorna Moon

THESE two favorites are co-starred in a story which brings tears one moment and smiles the next. Marie Dressler as "Min," a water-front hotel keeper, and Wallace Beery as a fisherman, one of her boarders, give splendid performances. The director, George Hill does good work.

Mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—7 reels)

Mother's Cry

Directed by.....*Hobart Henley*
Starring.....*David Manners*, *Dorothy Peterson*
Novel by Helen Carlisle

A gripping story of mother love. Although her eldest son brings a woman only sorrow her youngest brings some comfort through his success in life. Dorothy Peterson's portrayal of the mother is very convincing, likewise David Manners' as the youngest son.

Mature audience.

(First National—7 reels)

The Passion Flower

Directed by.....*William De Mille*
Starring.....*Charles Bickford*, *Kay Francis*, *Kay Johnson*
Novel by Kathleen Norris

THE fine acting of the three principals makes this an interesting picture although it is the old story of a man who leaves his patient and loving wife for a more attractive woman. Zazu Pitts contributes some good comedy.

Mature audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—9 reels)

Remote Control

Directed by.....*Edward Sedgwick*
Starring.....*William Haines*
Play by Clyde North, A. Fuller and Jack Nelson

GOOD comedy in which William Haines plays his usual smart-alec role, this

time as a radio announcer which offers many excuses for his wise-cracks.

Family audience.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—7 reels)

Sea Legs

Directed by ..... *Victor Heerman*
Starring ..... *Jack Oakie*
Screen story by George Marion, Jr.

AMUSING comedy of a young American boy who unexpectedly finds himself in the navy of a mythical island kingdom.

Family audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Sin Takes a Holiday

Directed by ..... *Paul L. Stein*
Starring ..... *Constance Bennett*
Screen story by Robert Milton and Dorothy Cairns

DRAMA concerning the love of a girl for her employer and the method she devises to save him from a designing woman. This star's work is gaining in popularity and she has here a good supporting cast telling the story interestingly.

Mature audience.

(Pathe—8 reels)

Sunny

Directed by ..... *William A. Seiter*
Starring ..... *Marilyn Miller*
Musical comedy by Harbach, Hammerstein II and Kern

A light musical comedy of an English circus girl who becomes a stowaway in order to reach America and be near the boy she loves. The attractive star who played the role in the original "Sunny" duplicates her stage performance on the screen.

Family audience.

(First National—8 reels)

EXCEPTIONAL PHOTOPLAYS

Laughter

(See page 7)

Mature audience.

(Paramount—8 reels)

Soil

(See page 9)

Mature audience.

(Amkino—6 reels)

Tol'able David

(See page 6)

Family audience.

(Columbia—9 reels)

SHORT SUBJECTS

Believe It or Not No. 4

(Vitaphone No. 1067)

Ripley's collection of strange facts.

Family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

The Bughouse

Tony the Pup among the flowers and bugs.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(R K O—1 reel)

Curiosities

Strange bits of life from here and there.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Columbia—1 reel)

Dublin and Nearby

(Around the World with Burton Holmes)

Beautiful scenes of Ireland.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

The Dutchman's Paradise

The Rambling Reporter shows us Java.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Columbia—1 reel)

The Glory of Spain

(Vagabond Adventure Series)

The Vagabond Director takes us to Spain.

Family audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Gypped in Egypt

(Aesop Fables)

Two travelers have exciting adventures in an Egyptian tomb.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Henry Santry

(Vitaphone No. 1128)

Miscellaneous musical bits.

Family audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

High C's

Charlie Chase sings his way through the World War even into the hearts of his enemies.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—3 reels)

High Steppers

(Sportlight Series)

Shots of cross country running, hundred yard dash and relay racing.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Pathe—1 reel)

In Africa

(Oswald Cartoon)

The Lucky Rabbit visits darkest Africa.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Universal—1 reel)

In Mexico

(Oswald Cartoon)

Oswald looks at Mexico.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Universal—1 reel)

The Indians Are Coming

A serial of twelve episodes which proves highly entertaining for the children as it concerns exciting happenings in the days of the Wild West.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Universal—2 reels each)

Into Morocco

(Around the World with Burton Holmes)

A trip through Morocco.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

Lambs Will Gamble

(Krazy Kat Cartoon)

Krazy Kat plays the market.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Columbia—1 reel)

Let's Talk Turkey

The Rambling Reporter visits Turkey.

Family audience. Junior matinee.

(Columbia—1 reel)

The Love Punch

Comedy of two partners, a Jew and an Irishman, who quarrel continually.

For the mature audience.

(Universal—2 reels)

Love Your Neighbor

Charlotte Greenwood tries to perform good deeds but everything goes wrong.

For the family audience.

(Educational—2 reels)

A Medley of Rivers

(Hodge-Podge Series)

Lovely views of famous rivers.

Family audience.

(Educational—1 reel)

Midnight

A cat's midnight serenade causes trouble.

For the family audience. Junior audience.

(Pathe—1 reel)

Mr. Intruder

(Vitaphone No. 1074)

Otto Kruger in a clever sketch of a husband who traps his unfaithful wife.

For the mature audience.

(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Modern Madrid
(Around the World with Burton Holmes)
Excellent scenic of Madrid.
Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

My Mistake
(Vitaphone No. 1086)
Amusing travesty on crime.
For the family audience.
(Vitaphone—1 reel)

Mystic Isles
(Vagabond Adventure Series)
Lovely views of the Dutch East Indies.
Family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

New Rhythm
Strange music excellently played by the Havana Casino Orchestra.
For the family audience.
(Paramount—1 reel)

The Office Boy
(Aesop Fables)
Cartoon of a singing, dancing office boy.
Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Papa's Mistake
Comedy concerning the clever way in which an Irish lad obtains consent to his marriage. For the family audience.
(Capital—2 reels)

Par and Double Par
(Sportlight Series)
Golfing by Bobby Jones and an amateur.
Family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Paramount Pictorial No. 2
Events and scenes in many parts of the world. Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Pathe Audio Review Nos. 40-47
For the family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel each)

Peep at Peking
(Around the World with Burton Holmes)
Depicting the customs of the Chinese.
Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

The Picnic
(Mickey Mouse Cartoon)
Mickey goes on a picnic.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Columbia—1 reel)

Racqueteers
(Sportlight Series)
Shots of tennis, lacrosse and the Cuban handball game, jai-a-lai.
For the family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

The Road Home
The Kentucky Singers render some old time spirituals. For the mature audience.
(Tiffany—2 reels)

Sand of Egypt
The Vagabond Director takes us on a thrilling trip through the Egyptian tombs.
For the family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Scotch Highball
(Terry-Toons)
Cartoon of an exciting horse race.
Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Educational—1 reel)

Screen Snapshots
Stars of Hollywood at work and play.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Columbia—1 reel)

Sky Scraping
Cartoon of fun atop a skyscraper.
Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Paramount—1 reel)

15 Je'32

So Quiet on the Canine Front

Dogs play the parts of soldiers at the front. Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—2 reels)

Strange As It Seems Nos. 2-3

Strange and unique sights.
Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Universal—1 reel each)

Sure Cure

The police's version of a man's criminal action which consists of shooting his wife for refusing to have beans for dinner.
Mature audience.
(Paramount—1 reel)

Touch Down

(Knute Rockne Football Series)
The famous Notre Dame coach illustrates some tricky plays.
For the family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

Two Minutes To Go

(Knute Rockne Football Series)
Some more of Rockne's famous plays.
For the family audience.
(Pathe—1 reel)

The Village Barber

A cartoon of Flip the Frog.
For the family audience. Junior matinee.
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—1 reel)

The Voice of Hollywood Nos. 20-22

Hollywood actors before the microphone at station STAR in short skits.
Family audience. Junior matinee.
(Tiffany—1 reel each)

Walter Winchell

(Vitaphone No. 1091-2)
The Bard of Broadway helps five girls to get even with their teacher.
For the mature audience.
(Vitaphone—2 reels)

(*Continued from page* 13)

Interesting talks were given by managers of two of the local theatres. A unanimous vote of thanks was tendered the managers for their fine support and assistance in the children's matinees held every Saturday morning. It was reported that for the last month there has been an average of over a thousand children each week. Plans were also made to make the matinees more attractive and helpful to the children by having better pictures and additional features, such as community singing, special numbers and so forth.

THE Westwood (N. J.) Better Films Committee performed a most appreciated service in the community last year through the publication of a Photoplay Guide. During the summer months this was discontinued but at the first fall meeting of the Committee on October the 16th plans were made for again issuing the Guide with the co-operation of the local paper. As a preparation for the year's activity the scope of the work of each committee was reviewed and weighed at this meeting.

LITERATURE from the National Board was in demand for display and distribution at a number of organization meetings recently. Among them were the national convention of the Girl Scouts in Indianapolis, October the first to fifth; the convention of the New York State Parent-Teacher Association in Rochester, October the sixth to ninth; the New Jersey State D. A. R. conference in Atlantic City, October the fifteenth. This is a very effective and helpful way of bringing the services of the Board to a wider public and we are always delighted therefore to have requests from interested groups for literature.

20087 488

THE BETTER FILMS NATIONAL COUNCIL

of the

National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

offers through its

AFFILIATED BETTER FILMS COMMITTEES

An Opportunity to Promote Better Motion Picture Programs in Your Home Theatre

The Better Films Committee or Motion Picture Study Club plan has been found by many communities to be an adaptable and effective method of accomplishing telling organized local work for better pictures.

The purposes of the Better Films Committees affiliated with the Better Films National Council are:

To encourage study of the motion picture as a medium of entertainment, instruction and artistic expression;

To bring to the attention of the public the better pictures through the publication of a Photoplay Guide, based upon the selections and audience suitability classifications of the Review Committees of the National Board of Review;

To sponsor Juniors' Matinees, showing pictures particularly suitable for boys and girls, and week-end family programs whenever possible with exhibitors' bookings;

To emphasize the fact that the only effective way of bringing public opinion to aid in the development of the motion picture and its best uses is through the constructive methods of the Better Films movement embodying the theory of selection and classification and the seeking of community support for the better pictures.

The Better Films National Council as an aid in carrying out these purposes furnishes an information service through its various publications.

Please use the coupon below and write for the publications you yourself would like or would like to have sent to interested friends.

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70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

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